

**DI CAPRIO UNMASKED**

Superstar's double role

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Marianne Wiggins on Toni Morrison's new novel

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**30 PAGES OF JOBS**

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SECTION 3

Brown hints that interest rates will not rise

## Soaring £ puts export jobs under threat

By Philip Webster and Janet Bush

THE pound soared to a nine-year high in the wake of the Budget yesterday, bringing warnings from exporters and unions that tens of thousands of jobs were being put at risk by the strength of sterling and high interest rates.

At the same time, Gordon Brown was fighting to resist pressure for still higher interest rates to stop the economy overheating as shares reached record levels.

In what appeared to be a signal that he believes there is no need for interest rates to rise beyond their present level of 7.25 per cent, the Chancellor spoke throughout the day of the significant "fiscal tightening" that had taken place with a £17 billion cut in borrowing over two years.

And he disclosed that he had given his Budget arithmetic on tax and borrowing to the Bank of England's monetary committee before its meeting this month, which left interest rates unchanged. The clear implication was that the committee had looked at the state of the finances and decided they did not justify putting base rates up.

The Chancellor spoke as part of a media blitz in which he hinted that some of the changes left out of the Budget will come later in the Parliament. He committed the Government to bringing in the new 10p rate of tax during the present Parliament — the first time he has put a timescale on it — and suggested that the decision to leave mortgage interest relief untouched was merely a reprieve. Ministers expect it to go when Mr Brown brings in the 10p tax rate.

But Mr Brown faced a barrage of criticism from analysts who said he should have done more to dampen the economy by raising taxes.



"The pound's too high at the moment — here's 5p"

Roger Bootle, chief executive of the HSBC banking group, said that the high value of the pound could cause disaster for industry. "The Budget didn't do as much as it might have done and accordingly I think the Governor (of the Bank of England) has a pretty tricky job holding the line," he said. "Our export business is, I think, in danger of being devastated by a pound this high. It is ludicrously overvalued."

Michael Robson, president of the UK Steel Association and commercial director of British Steel, told the *World at One* on BBC Radio 4 that the strong pound was already killing people's jobs. "It takes you years to get export business, and you can lose that business in two or three minutes. The UK steel industry is hanging on to its customers, but it's taken the pain on the margins. This involves a progressive and significant loss of jobs."

And John Monks, the TUC general secretary, predicted that unemployment could rise by 200,000 by late 1999 unless interest rates were cut. "The wider picture shows that

Britain's labour market is slowing down. Up to 90,000 manufacturing jobs are at risk."

The reaction on the foreign exchanges suggested that Mr Brown's protestations of toughness had cut little ice. The pound was pushed to above DM 3.05, its highest level for seven months, and against a range of currencies it was at its highest point for nine years.

Dealers were betting that the monetary policy committee would have to raise rates again because of Mr Brown's failure to squeeze consumers. The committee is, however, likely to be deeply split again when it next meets on April 8 and 9. And it seems unlikely that the Budget will have any impact on the array of opinions already evident on the committee. Kevin Darlington, economist at ABN Amro, said: "The neutrality of the Budget will not budge hawk or dove on the MPC."

The doves received vital ammunition yesterday from encouraging news on the wages front, although even this crucial piece of economic evidence only briefly dented confidence in the pound.

There was also new evidence yesterday that the economy was already losing steam. Retail sales fell sharply in February as the huge discounts of the January sales came to an end. Headline unemployment also fell by 13,700 in February, but this was a far smaller monthly decline than those seen last year.

Hopes that the earnings news and signs of economic weakening will allow the doves to win the day on interest rates powered the stock market to another record high. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares jumped 68.7 points to close at 5,933.6.

Budget reaction, pages 12, 13  
Plans for Brown, page 27  
Commentary, page 29



Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother found the going amusing when she attended the Cheltenham National Hunt Festival yesterday. Looking remarkably agile after her recent hip operation, she was there to present the trophy to the winner of the Queen Mother Champion Chase. She also saw Top Cees, the horse at the centre of the recent high-profile libel case involving jockey Kieren Fallon, trainer Lynda Ramsden and her husband, Jack,

## Good form at Cheltenham

ramp home in the Coral Cup Handicap Hurdle. Three weeks after winning £195,000 in damages over an allegation of not trying with the horse the trio savoured the triumph. They had sued *The Sporting Life* after after Top Cees won

the 1995 Chester Cup three weeks after finishing fifth in a race at Newmarket where he had started favourite. "This was the icing on the cake," Lynda Ramsden said yesterday after the 11-1 win for jockey Barry Fenton. The Queen Mother Champion Chase was won by Brian Harding on One Man, who came in at 7-2. The cup was presented to John Hales, the owner. *Racing, pages 46, 47*

## Edwards race hope dashed as mast collapses

By Simon de Bruxelles

AN ATTEMPT to break the record for sailing non-stop around the world ended in disaster in the south Pacific yesterday for yachtswoman Tracy Edwards when her mast snapped 2,000 miles from land.

None of the 11 all-women crew on board the *Royal Sun Alliance* was injured in the accident which happened shortly after the 92ft catamaran was hit by a huge wave. Last night they were rigging up an improvised sail for the gruelling three week voyage to Argentina.

The catamaran was on course to beat the 71-day record when disaster struck in gale force winds yesterday. The top 70ft of the 102ft-high mast broke in pitch darkness in the middle of the crew's forty third night at sea.

The crew, six of them British, had travelled 15,200 miles since setting off from Ushant, north-west France. They had been battling heavy seas in the Furious 50s for several days. The day before, Miss Edwards had been injured after being thrown off her feet by a large wave.

Race organisers heard of the disaster when signals from an automatic distress beacon triggered when the mast fell into the sea were picked up by coastguards in Falmouth.

The catamaran was struck from behind by the wave in 40ft seas with winds gusting between 30 and 50 knots. The wave lifted the stern and buried the twin hulls in the wave ahead, bringing the vessel to a sudden stop from an average speed of around 14 knots. Five minutes later creaking was heard from the top of the mast and it crumpled over the port side, breaking as it struck the hull.

Miss Edwards, 35, speaking via satellite telephone, said: "Continued on page 2, col 5"

## Israelis snub Cook at airport

Israel delivered a final snub to Robin Cook yesterday: not one Israeli official was on hand to bid the Foreign Secretary farewell at Ben Gurion airport, near Tel Aviv, as he left for Syria. Israeli politicians gathered in the Knesset to attack his alleged pro-Arab bias. *Page 14*

## Sex law reforms

The Government is considering overhauling the mental health laws so that serious sex offenders such as paedophiles can be detained in secure hospitals at the end of jail terms. *Page 5*

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Mauritius 20.00; Norway Kr 25.00;  
Portugal Esc 350; Spain Ptas 375;  
Sweden 25.00; Switzerland 5 Frs 5.00; Tunisia Din 3.20; USA \$3.50.

## EU shake-up could cut food bills by £80 a year

By Charles Bremner in Brussels and Michael Hornsby

FOOD bills should drop by £80 a year under European Commission plans to reform the Common Agricultural Policy announced yesterday. But farmers would receive more taxpayers' money — as cash grants rather than crop subsidies.

The biggest shake-up of the CAP in forty years would expose farmers to the real marketplace and cut the prices they are guaranteed for their produce. It would also end the "set aside" system that pays them to grow nothing. But they would be compensated with direct grants that could add 10 per cent to the overall cost of the CAP.

The changes are being strongly resisted by Germany, France and farming organisations, but were welcomed by Britain. Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, said: "The proposals go very much in the direction we favour. Consumers will be a major beneficiary, saving over £1 billion a year from the proposed cut in support prices.

The rural environment will also benefit from the reforms. Under the plans put forward yesterday, farmers' guaranteed prices for beef would be cut by 30 per cent between 2000 and 2002; the cereal price would be cut by 20 per cent in one go in 2000; and milk prices would be trimmed by 15 per cent over four years from 2000. The effect should be to reduce the cost of other foods as well: for example, the drop in grain prices should lead to cheaper poultry and pork, and officials calculate that by 2004 every family's food bill should be cut by £80.

But while shop prices should fall, more money would be transferred directly from taxpayers to the farmers, who would be compensated for 80 per cent of the beef price cut; 70 per cent of the milk cut and 50 per cent of the cereal reduction. At the same time milk quotas would be increased by 2 per cent to the benefit of young farmers in mountain areas. Direct aid would, however,

be gradually reduced for farms receiving more than £65,000 a year and member states would be given discretion in the distribution of payments with priority being given to the environment and preserving the countryside. Farmers were unconvinced. Ian Gardiner, policy director of the National Farmers' Union, said: "In principle, there should be gains for consumers. But it has to be remembered that only a relatively small part of the price that shoppers pay is accounted for by what is paid to the farmer."

Ben Gill, the NFU president, described the proposals as a mix of the good, the damaging and the unacceptable, although he agreed with the overall goal of making the CAP more market-oriented. "No farmer can absorb further pressure, whether from uncompensated cuts in support or from knock-on market repercussions," he said.

Spending overhaul, page 6

## Butler chosen for Princess fund job

By Alan Hamilton

THE former butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, has been appointed fundraising manager of her memorial fund, it was announced last night.

Paul Burrell, 39, married with two children, became one of the late Princess's closest confidantes after her divorce. He flew to Paris to attend her body after her death, and was the only person outside her family at the private burial at Althorp, Northamptonshire, last September.



Burrell: taking care of Princess's public life

Mr Burrell, who was left a £50,000 legacy in Diana's will, said last night that the appointment was a natural progression for him to help carry forward Diana's charity work. There had been speculation that he would be offered the post of the fund's chief executive, still unfilled, but he said: "There is a much better person out there to do that job."

In an interview with BBC television, Mr Burrell, who worked for the Princess for ten years, said of his new post: "It is a way of carrying forward what I began ten years ago. I took care of her private life; now I can take care of her public life."

Mr Burrell declined to disclose any secrets about the Princess's relationship with Dodi Fayed, but said that, even if she had found happiness, she would never have abandoned her charity work. Mr Burrell begins his new post today when he flies to Los Angeles to attend a fundraising charity ball in Hollywood in aid of the memorial fund.

## Brooklyn rejoices as killers take a week off

From Tunku Varadarajan in New York

BROOKLYN, for long the homicide capital of America, has recorded its first murder-free week since the end of the Second World War.

To the astonishment of New Yorkers who believe that vast swaths of Brooklyn are "no go areas", not a single killing was recorded in any of the borough's 34 police precincts between March 8 and March 15. Speaking with obvious glee, How-

ard Safer, New York's Police Commissioner, said: "When you think of what the 75th precinct once looked like — when we had five or six murders a night — it's amazing."

The notorious 75th precinct in East New York had the highest murder rate of any precinct in America six years ago. And Kathy Ann Moore, a medical office manager who lives there, said: "I've lived in this community for more than 19 years and I've never heard such good news before."

Alas, Brooklyn's dream run was

rudely interrupted on the first day of the new week when a woman's body was found in the boot of a car in Red Hook. And a man was found murdered in his apartment in Sunset Park yesterday.

But the murder-free week (matched, incidentally by an equally astounding robbery-free week in Central Park) has had a profound impact on New Yorkers, who put the transformation down to the mayor Rudolph Giuliani and his "zero tolerance" strategy. In 1992, a record 2,262 killings were

reported in the city; last year there were 747 dead — the lowest figure for thirty years.

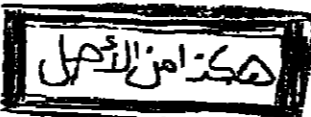
An officer from 75th precinct explained: "If a man is drinking a can of beer on the street corner, he knows he can't carry a gun because he'll get stopped. You target the guy drinking beer, jumping turnstiles, playing the radio loud, letting his pitbull run around in the park. They created fear, the illusion that criminals had control. Now, we've basically sent the bad guys on the run."

## 5 facts about male strippers

- 1 ten years ago there were 25,500 male strippers; today there are 290
- 2 male strippers earn on average £190 per performance
- 3 the majority of male strippers are married
- 4 standard equipment includes baby lotion, baby oil, shaving foam, fresh cream, yoghurt and a banana
- 5 most male strippers shave everything once a week

tonight 9.50pm on 5

PEOPLE LIFE





# Apology fails to win fans' forgiveness

### Newcastle United directors issue statement to win back their friends in North East after undercover story, reports Paul Wilkinson

TWO Newcastle United directors who allegedly ridiculed the fans, the players and the women of the North East yesterday put their apologies in black and white.

Freddie Shepherd, the club chairman, and Douglas Hall said that statements secretly recorded by a reporter in a Spanish brothel and bar did not represent their true views. They stayed away from last night's home game against Crystal Palace, saying that their presence would not be helpful for the team.

Angry supporters, who have pressed for their resignation, complained that none of the alleged comments had been withdrawn. Kevin Miles, of the Independent

Supporters Association, said: "There is an enormous amount of anger among fans at Newcastle. It is too late, too late; they should do the honourable thing."

In a statement yesterday, Mr Shepherd, 56, and Mr Hall, 39, described the *News of the World* story as "a series of highly sensationalised comments". The men allegedly called Tyneside women "dogs" and ridiculed supporters for paying £30 for replica kits that cost only £5 to make in Asia. They also dubbed Alan Shearer, the club's £15 million striker, "Mary Poppins" for his impeccable behaviour and insulted Kevin Keegan, the former manager.

Their statement read: "Douglas Hall and Freddie Shepherd sincerely apologise for any offence that has been caused to members of their families, the fans of Newcastle, the people of the North East and their fellow directors. They particularly apologise to the women of the North East."

"Anybody who knows Douglas and Freddie would realise that the comments attributed to them are totally out of character and do not represent their true views. While their behaviour has been called into question by the *News of the World*, they in turn are entitled to a full explanation from the *News of the World* concerning the way in which the meeting was dishonestly set up by that newspaper and the way in which it was then reported."

In a further statement before last night's match, Mr Shepherd said: "Nothing must detract from our team's performance."

The men claim that the *News of the World* breached the Press Complaints Commission guidelines and are taking legal advice.

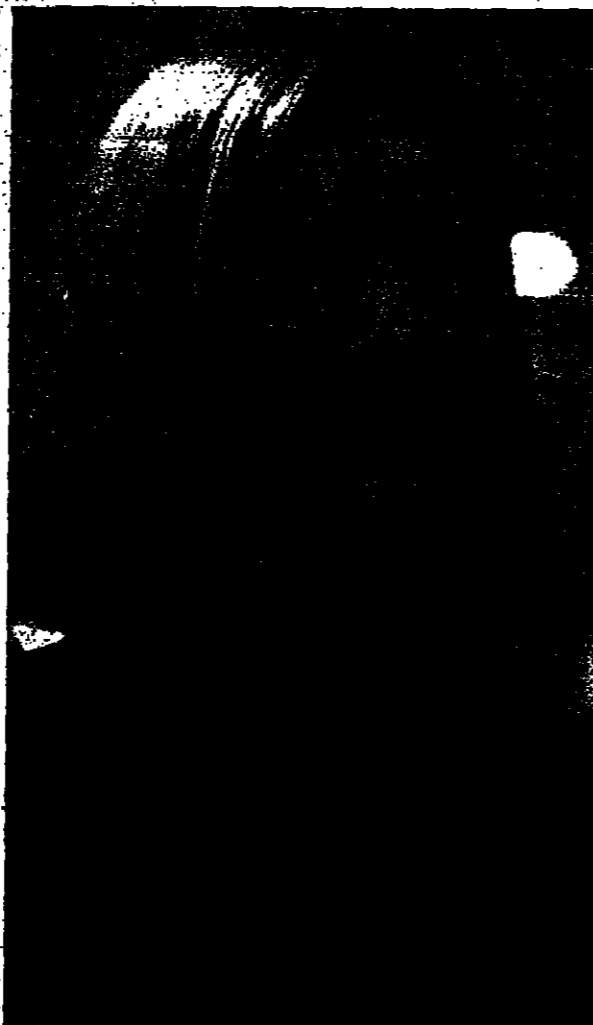
Phil Hall, Editor of the *News of the World*, called the apology "woefully inadequate". He said more revelations were likely.



Douglas Hall



Freddie Shepherd



Laurie Robinson, 22, a make-up artist — "You have to dress up to the nines before you can go out here" — Tracy McCabe, 22, and Sandra Purvis, 35, a law student



Alan McLean and Nicky Flaminshelk: "Not fair"



Photographers: IAN DUNCAN and CARL RUTHERFORD

## Sparkling with glamour, fizzing with anger

### Jane Shilling finds that Tyneside women are not ready to kiss and make up with their football club's bosses

THE women of Newcastle upon Tyne, a city once described by the French magazine *Elle* as "the symbol of a romantic England", are not in romantic mood. Freddie Shepherd and Douglas Hall are said to have described the flower of northeastern womanhood as "dogs" and "ugly".

Newcastle is a city whose self-esteem is intimately bound up with its football club. To be described as ugly by the directors of Newcastle United is rather like being called a dog by a member of your family. The resulting emotions are not lightly dismissed.

The offence is made worse by the fact that Newcastle women pride themselves on their appearance.

They are big on skirts and make-up and getting dressed up at the weekend. The crumpled, just-popped-out-in-my-nightgown look — the dubious epitome of London sophistication — doesn't play there at all, says Gillian Johnson, 25, an assistant manager at Oasis in the Eldon Square Shopping Centre. She shifts an awful lot of glittery stuff, she says — little sparkly tops, fitted dresses, a glamorous look for Newcastle's busy nightlife. The average spend is £140.

Eldon Square, minutes from the St James's ground, is busy with shoppers wearing designer logos — Versace, Calvin Klein — laden with bags from high street fashion chains — Warehouse, River Island,

French Connection — and fizzing with indignation at the slight to Newcastle women.

"It's not true," said Laurie Robinson, 22, a make-up artist, window shopping on her way to a job interview. Dressed in a tailored trouser suit and lacy camisole — "You have to dress up to the nines before you can go out here, there is so much competition" — she spends about £200 a month on clothes and felt insulted by the directors' criticism: "They should resign."

Sandra Purvis, 35, a law student, was on her way to buy pyjamas for her baby daughter, Ellen. She had intended to get them from the Newcastle club shop but had changed her mind and gone to

Mothercare. "I used to be a Newcastle supporter but not any more. I'm disgusted that women are going to the match tonight."

Mr Shepherd and Mr Hall are not without supporters. Outside the club shop in Strawberry Place, Alan McLean and Nicky Flaminshelk, both 17, thought there was some justice to the remarks. "It's not entirely fair to call Newcastle women ugly," said Alan, natty in Yves Saint Laurent jeans and Lee shirt, "but it's a bit fair. People from the South are generally better looking."

Nicky, in Chipie fleece top, had reservations about Newcastle women's clothes sense. "The social scene here is really good, but people go

out looking very tarty, in short, tight skirts and see-through tops. It makes a bad impression."

Outside the ground, before the match against Crystal Palace, Neil Tyerman, 29, a postman, and his girlfriend, Tracy McCabe, 22, were planning to express their feelings: "We'll see what everyone else is shouting, and we'll probably shout it too." Tracy, elegant in Faith boots, Miss Selfridge mini-skirt, Warehouse jacket, lilac nail polish and masses of silver jewellery, was looking particularly soignée. Is that how she would normally dress for a football match? "Well, yes," said Tracy astonished at the question. "I wouldn't go out in just jeans and a jumper."

## Detective lived as a crook to catch £6m gang

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

AN UNDERCOVER detective posed as a crooked security guard for 18 months to foil an armed gang planning Britain's biggest cash robbery. The officer, who moved house and severed links with his friends for the mission, will be offered counselling to help him return to normal life.

Seven members of the gang will be sentenced next week at Kingston Crown Court after two men were convicted yesterday for their part in the £6 million raid. Michael Rose, 47, and Michael Sullivan, 28, from East London, were found guilty of theft involving a vanload of used £20 notes. Five others admitted their roles at the start of the trial.

The undercover officer, known by the pseudonym John Harding, was sent to infiltrate the gang in September 1995. Flying Squad detectives were suspicious that a high number of raids were taking place on vans leaving

the Securitas depot in Wandsworth, southwest London.

Harding posed as a driver and driver's mate for the company. Seven months later he was invited to join the gang and began to tape-record their using a machine hidden inside a mobile telephone. The gang kept the robbery date secret but Harding was told to watch for another gang member on his route as the signal.

The first attack on March 6 last year was aborted after Harding's van broke down. The next day, as the Armaguard truck was transferring cash from Barclays cash centre in Southwark, South London, to the Securitas depot in Congreve Road, Wandsworth, Harding "accidentally" opened the door of the truck, triggering an alarm system and bringing it to a halt. A supervisor was called out to reset the alarms, and the gang struck. Then the Flying Squad swooped.

## Teenage girls get into boxing ring at last

By PETER FOSTER

THE boxing match between two teenage girls that was cancelled last year after it caused a public outcry has finally taken place.

The three-round contest, which was held without advance publicity to avoid a repeat of the "media pressure" that was blamed for the previous cancellation, was staged at the Bramstone Victoria Working Men's Club in Leicester on Tuesday evening.

The fight was won by Emma Brammer, 14, on a unanimous points decision over her 13-year-old opponent, Andrea Prime. The bout was watched by a crowd of 300.

The British Medical Association said: "The fact that these girls have started boxing at such a young age means they are risking injury, particularly to their eyes and brains."

However, the girls, their families and the event's promoters were unapologetic yesterday. A jubilant Miss

Brammer, from Stoke-on-Trent, announced after the fight that she would box on until she was crowned British champion. "After I threw the first punch and saw it land on Andrea's head I lost all my nerves and just concentrated on my boxing," she said. "I didn't expect to win but I actually won all three rounds. Although she landed a few punches on me, I made her nose bleed," she said.

Miss Prime, from Wigston, Leicester, remained positive despite her defeat which was watched by her mother, father and younger brother Glenn, 11, who also fought on the same bill. "I would have loved to have won my first fight but I hope to have plenty more chances."

She added: "I hope that everyone will understand that there is nothing wrong with boxing between girls of my age. If boys are allowed to, why not girls?"

## Caddy accused of being a cad

By GILLIAN HARRIS, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A BOOK hailing the eccentricities of golf's unsung heroes seemed unlikely to become a bestseller. But when it was published in America, Richard Mackenzie's celebration of the St Andrews' caddies proved a huge success.

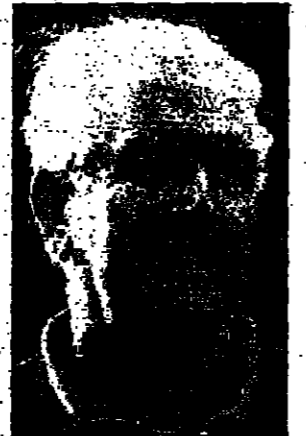
*A Wee Nip at the 19th Hole* is published in Britain today with a small party at St Andrews. But the man who claims he spent five years helping to produce it will be at home. James Moore, 72, a veteran caddy who says he worked alongside the author at the Old Course compiling anecdotes in the caddies' pavilion, says Mr Mackenzie, 50, and his publisher for a half share of the profits because he alleges his contribution has not been recognised.

Mr Mackenzie denies this. Mr Moore says he produced hand-written research material that has appeared unchanged in the book. He insists that the two men signed a contract agreeing that both their names would appear on the book and they would divide the proceeds equally.

But the first Mr Moore knew about the book's publication was in January when another caddy told him that Mr Mackenzie had written a book and was almost a millionaire.

The only reference to Mr Moore in the book is a photograph and caption that reads: "James Moore, golf historian and collector of memorabilia."

Mr Moore, a former civil servant who took up



Moore claims that he co-wrote golfing book

quadruple by-pass surgery. He spent 18 months recuperating. Years passed and Mr Moore assumed the project had been dropped.

In January this year Mr Moore met the fellow caddy who told him about the book. "The following day I went down to see Ricky [Mackenzie]," Mr Moore said. "I asked him, what's this about a golf book? He said, 'It's nothing at all like what you and I researched. But I got a copy and compared it with the hand-written notes I had kept. Of the 140 pages I had, I have linked between 90 and 100 to the book. So I decided to sue. I am not doing it for the money. I want acknowledgement of the work I put in to this book. I am happy for Ricky to be the front man. But he has stabbed me in the back.'"



MARCH 22nd. THIS MOTHER'S DAY, SAY IT WITH FERRERO ROCHER.

# IF YOU'RE A MOTORIST, TUESDAY WAS A **BAD** DAY.

The Budget yet again increased petrol tax way above inflation. Motorists now give the government more than £16 each time they put £20 of petrol in the tank.

The Chancellor said tax rises were needed because emissions are growing fast.

**Not so.**

There are more cars on the road but over the last five years their "greenhouse" emissions haven't risen and toxic gases have fallen by 25%\*.

Road-user taxation next year will be around £30 billion.

But less than £1 in every £4 of this will be spent on the UK's crumbling roads network and local public transport that people will **want** to use.

The Chancellor talks of "fairness"... and that must mean motorists **getting** what they **pay** for.

Bypasses built, not just promised. Maintenance **before** it's too late, so minor roadworks don't become major ones.

Every penny of extra taxation **must** be invested in better roads and public transport.

Motorists have been a soft touch for too long.

It's time they had a fair deal.



The **motorists'** organisation

# Court backs police who identified paedophiles

Ruling says protection of children takes priority, writes Kathryn Knight

A COUPLE convicted of sexually abusing children yesterday lost their legal battle against police who released their identity to the local community in order to protect the public.

Peter and Christine Thorpe, described by one probation officer as "Frederick and Rosemary West without the bodies" had argued that North Wales Police had acted unlawfully when they alerted the public to their presence on a caravan site at Wrexham that was soon to be filled with holidaying families. They have since "gone to ground" and their precise whereabouts are not known to the authorities.

In a vital test case ruling in the Court of Appeal yesterday, Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, ruled that the police had acted entirely lawfully in telling the owner of the caravan site that the couple were there just before Easter last year. He said they had sensitively balanced the Thorpes' wish to be

allowed to settle down against the serious risk they pose to children. However, he cautioned that "disclosure should be made only when there is a pressing need for that disclosure", and emphasised the significance of trying to find appropriate accommodation for offenders released from prison.

Up to 150 paedophiles are soon to be released into the community without compulsory supervision. They include Sidney Cook, who was jailed for the torture and murder of Jason Swift.

The Thorpes were appealing against a ruling by Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, in the High Court last year, which had denied them a judicial review of the police's decision to name them.

Originally from Burnley, Lancashire, the couple were jailed for 11 years in November 1989 for a string of sexual offences against children, including the rape of a 17-year-

old girl by Thorpe, 46, while his 42-year-old wife took photographs. The couple were released in July 1996 and settled in a flat in Blyth, Northumberland. However, they were forced to move on continually as each community discovered who they were.

Just before Easter last year they moved to the Wrexham caravan site, where police showed a copy of a newspaper article about them to the site owner who promptly evicted them. The couple were last heard of living in a caravan in a layby.

The Thorpes had claimed that North Wales Police had acted unfairly and irrationally in revealing their identity to the community, and that they had been seeking to drive the couple out of the locality.

The court was told that North Wales Police had been sent a report from their colleagues in the Northumbria force describing the Thorpes as "extremely dangerous people" who posed a consider-

able risk to children and vulnerable adults in the community where they settled.

In a hearing earlier this year Edward Fitzgerald QC, said it was irrational of the police to reveal the Thorpes' presence on the caravan site, and they had contravened the couple's human rights. He said they had not been given the opportunity to respond to the allegations made against them in the Northumbria police report, including one that said Mr Thorpe was unrepentant and that his wife was "the most obvious sex offender he had ever experienced" and had "expressed the ability to kill".

Lord Woolf said he accepted that consideration should have been given to the couple, but it was impossible to characterise the police's decision to warn the site owner about the Thorpes as irrational. "The police are entitled to use information when they reasonably conclude this is what is required, after taking into account the interests of



Christine and Peter Thorpe: it is not known where they have been since being forced to leave caravan site

the applicant, in order to protect the public and in particular children," Lord Woolf said.

He said recent Home Office guidelines reflected the need to maintain the balance between

the interests of the individual and the needs of the public as required by Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The case "highlighted the significance of trying to find

appropriate accommodation for offenders when they are released from prison. This is surely where this case illustrates action is needed," he said.

"It is now recognised that

what is required above all is a proactive rather than reactive policy for dealing with offenders who have committed offences against children in the past." The couple are believed to have moved from Wales.

# Freed child sex abusers may be kept in hospital

By Stewart Tandler and Richard Ford

THE Government is considering overhauling the mental health laws so that serious sex offenders can be detained in secure hospitals at the end of jail terms.

The Home Office and Health Department are studying whether the Mental Health Act could be reformed to cover paedophiles. Under proposals being discussed by officials, if a paedophile was considered to be a risk after serving his sentence he would be sent to a mental hospital.

The study was disclosed during talks at the Home Office at which police and probation officers from Sussex put forward calls for a national strategy to deal with serious, predatory paedophiles in the wake of the release from jail of Robert Oliver. Penny Buller, chief probation officer of East Sussex, said: "It was a very constructive discussion."

Paul Whitehouse, Chief Constable of Sussex, said it was important to get the right measures in place to reassure the public so that the temptation for vigilantism was removed.

It has cost more than £100,000 to look after, guard and house Oliver since he was freed from jail last year after

serving a prison sentence for the killing of Jason Swift during a homosexual orgy. It is costing £320 a day to keep him as a voluntary patient at a private clinic in Milton Keynes.

The need for changes to the law was highlighted by East Sussex Probation Services, which found that Oliver could not be held in a secure mental hospital because he was not found to be suffering from a psychiatric illness. At the moment paedophiles are classified as "bad but not mad". Most are classified as sexual deviants with a personality disorder that does not qualify them for compulsory admission to a region secure unit or Rampton or Broadmoor top security hospitals.

The Government is also considering the introduction of indeterminate sentences that would mean a sex offender would be released from jail only when it was considered there was no risk to the public. Other measures being looked at are for paedophiles to be electronically tagged.

Last week Miss Buller disclosed that six predatory paedophiles, similar to Robert Oliver, and 144 other sex offenders are due to be freed in the next two years without the need for extended supervision. All will have to go on the sex offenders register so that police and probation staff will know their whereabouts but they are under no obligation to be supervised.

One of those due to be released is Sidney Cook, jailed with Oliver.

John Tildesley, 64, the father of Mark Tildesley, who was abducted in 1984, has suffered a stroke. The boy disappeared at the age of seven after visiting a fair near his home in Wokingham, Berkshire. No one was ever charged with his murder, but Cooke and his gang were blamed for the youngster's death.



Jason Swift: he was killed by Robert Oliver



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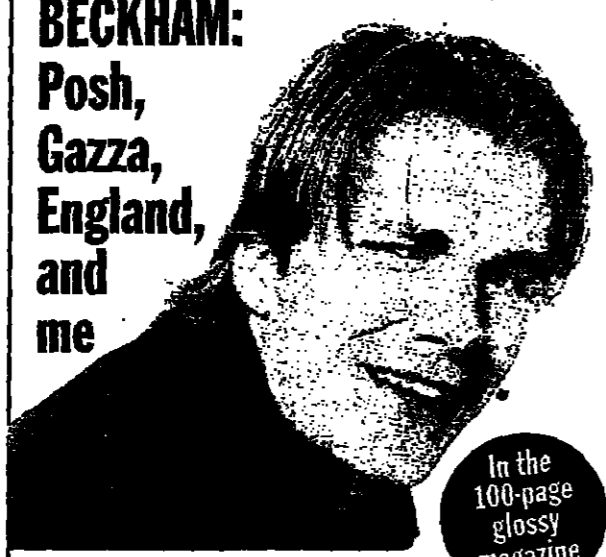
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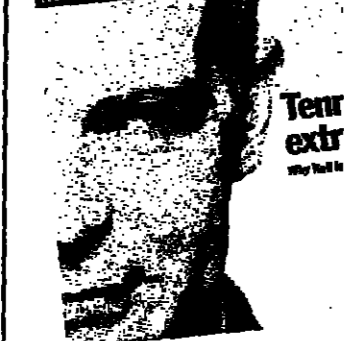
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**A PET SHOP BOY**  
on Noël Coward

# Regions will lose in EU spending reform

Highlands and Northern Ireland will no longer qualify for aid, though safety net may help to ease the blow, writes Charles Bremner

BRITAIN could lose hundreds of millions of pounds a year in European Union regional aid under rigorous spending reforms announced yesterday, but the Brussels Commission agreed to a safety net that might soften the measures.

Among Britain's three official "poor regions", now receiving £300 million of aid a year, the Highlands and Islands and Northern Ireland would no longer qualify. However, Merseyside would be joined by South Yorkshire as eligible for funds, according to the latest figures. The home of *The Full Monty* becomes the only new region in Europe to qualify for "Objective 1" status, which covers the least prosperous parts of the EU.

Monika Wulf-Mathies, the Commissioner for the Regions, who has been the target of heavy British lobbying, said: "This is proof that what we decided together is working properly."

The safety net will set a maximum cut of a third, measured by affected population, in aid to areas of industrial and rural decline. Britain will be worse hit than elsewhere, because unemployment levels will be

used as the main yardstick for the first time. At present 35 per cent of the population, largely in the North of England, Central Scotland and Wales, is covered by the funds, totalling about £700 million a year.

Margaret Beckett, the Minister for Trade, said the Government would fight for a fairer deal. Britain's lobbying had "already paid dividends" with the safety net, she said.

The planned cuts are part of the most drastic overhaul in the way the EU spends its money since Britain joined the then Common Market in 1973. Driven by the need to cap overall spending while shifting resources towards future new member states from the former Communist East, the six-year plan also includes a contested shake-up in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which now consumes half the EU's £60 billion annual budget. Broadly backed by Britain but fiercely resisted by France and Germany, this aims to push food prices down towards market levels while reducing subsidies to farmers.

Unravelling the "Agenda 2000" package, Jacques Santer, the Commission President, said that Brussels had



Wulf-Mathies said right decisions were made

done its best to "square the circle". "The EU has never had such a rigorous spending programme as we are proposing today," he said.

Much horse-trading will follow among the 15 member governments before the final package takes effect in 2000. The Commission aims to keep total spending well below the current 1.27 per cent of gross domestic product.

Britain's budget rebate, won by Margaret Thatcher in 1984, was not mentioned by the Commission, but Mr Santer noted that it would be a focus of negotiations. Germany and The Netherlands are both demanding "drops" in their shares of EU funding. Even

with the rebate, Britain is still one of the biggest net contributors, paying about £1.6 billion net a year for membership.

The campaign by British ministers bore fruit in the carve-up of future "Structural Funds", the regional aid programme which was set up in 1988 to bring living standards into line and which now takes up a third of the overall EU budget. The Commission wants to trim the funds by 10 per cent to allow for the drain that will come in the next decade from the much poorer new members — Poland, Estonia, Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

More than two thirds of the EU's present money goes to the underdeveloped Objective 1 regions for projects such as road-building and industrial conversion. To qualify, local GDP per head must be below 75 per cent of the EU average. The group now being joined by the new poor South Yorkshire consists mainly of regions in Greece, Spain and Portugal, the only three states poorer than Britain, by GDP-per-head standards.

Britain still plans to fight to reinstate the Highlands and Islands as well as adding Cornwall. The disqualified regions will still enjoy a gradual phasing-out of their cash.

The main gesture to Britain was the higher-than-expected safety net, which limits cuts to the areas in industrial decline, known as Objective 2.

Leading article, page 23



Robert Carlyle prepares to strip in *The Full Monty*

## Sheffield hails its poor status

By ALEXANDRA FREAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

IN OTHER times it might be cause for commiseration, but last night South Yorkshire was celebrating the official recognition that it is one of the poorest places in Europe.

In Sheffield, whose poverty was highlighted in *The Full Monty*, officials said they were delighted. Gavin Hine, of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the news, although he pointed out that there was a downside. "It is a double-edged sword. You want the funding, but you do not want to send out the signal that you're a depressed area."

"We have to put out the right signal now. We were chosen not because we have lots of unemployed, it is because we have specific problems."

South Yorkshire has suffered particularly badly from pit closures, the run-down in the steel and manufacturing industries and the subsequent effect on its communities in the past decade. It is expected to be the only new region within the 15 EU states to qualify for structural aid under new rules announced yesterday.

## Farmers offered lump sum to leave their land

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

SHEEP and beef farmers are to be offered early retirement as part of a restructuring package for the livestock industry proposed yesterday by the Government.

The scheme, partially funded by the European Union, would offer farmers between the age of 55 and 65 a lump sum of up to £24,000 to see them out of the industry. A condition of the pay-off would be that their farm be sold for agricultural use with another farm or turned over to a non-agricultural use. The Government believes that the number of beef farmers in particular will have to fall because of declining demand for beef throughout Europe.

Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, said he wanted to consult farmers on "a range of existing measures that might be used to improve the structure and viability of

the livestock industry. I am particularly keen for comments on whether an early retirement scheme, outlined in the consultation document, has a role to play in this process."

Ben Gill, president of the National Farmers' Union, said: "The attractiveness of the scheme will obviously depend on individual circumstances, but it could have a bigger impact than the relatively small amount of money on offer might suggest."

"It could encourage a farmer who was already thinking about early retirement to bring his decision forward by a year or two."

Consultation will last until April 30. The NFU said it was anxious to see a retirement scheme up and running by the autumn. Although initially it would be directed mainly at beef and sheep farmers, the Government has indicated

that it could be extended to dairy farmers.

A new pay award for farmworkers, announced yesterday, will raise the minimum pay of full-time workers by 14p to £4.26 an hour and that of casual employees by 15p to £3.21 an hour. The new rates will take effect in June. The agreement was reached after two days of talks at the Agricultural Wages Board, which fixes the rate each year in the absence of collective bargaining rights for the workers.

Bob Fidderman, chairman of the NFU's employment and education committee, said: "This year's negotiations took place against a backdrop of an extremely difficult year for the whole farming industry. We believe the result achieved is a fair one."

Workers' representatives had initially asked for a doubling of minimum wage rates.

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# Computer turns back the pages of history

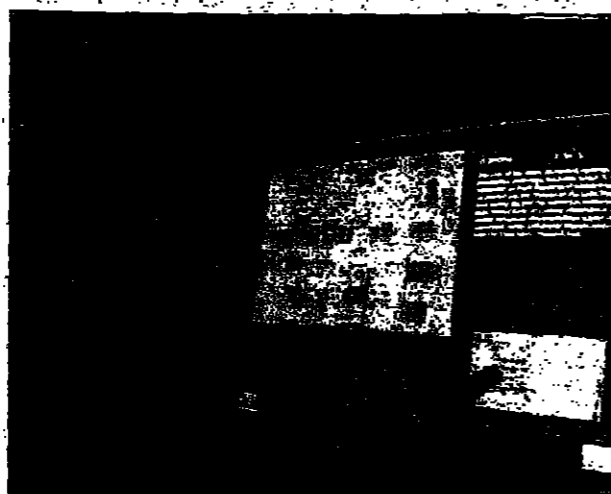
Readers will seem to flick through manuscripts, writes Dalya Alberge

VISITORS to the British Library will be able to "turn" the pages of historic and fragile books through computer simulation. Moving a finger across a screen will activate an animated image that gives the sensation of flicking through the volume.

A rare book that can be touched only by scholars with white gloves and is exhibited under glass at the same page can be explored in its screen version as easily as a paperback novel.

The electronic viewing programme, which is believed to be unique to the library, was devised after it rejected a call for the 7th-century Lindisfarne Gospels to be returned to the monastery in which they were created.

The Anglo-Saxon volume, one of the world's oldest books, is a jewel of the library's collection. Some 250 pages were lavishly illustrated on exquisitely preserved calfskin and dedicated to St Cuthbert by the monks of



Clive Izard demonstrating the electronic page-turner

Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, off Northumberland. The library and Northumberland County Council have reached an agreement which allows the digital version to be enjoyed in the North East as well as London. The only

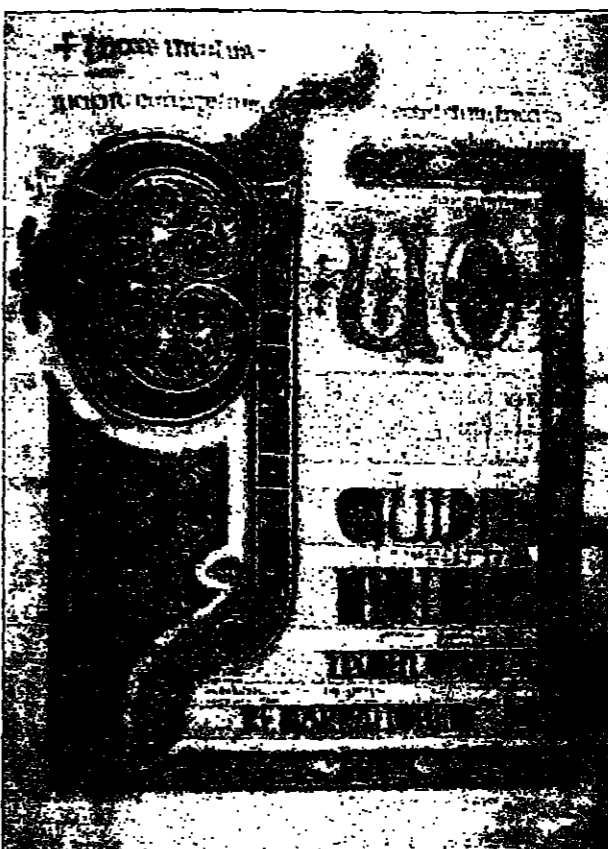
obstacle that prevents the library from creating similar programmes for other objects is cost: the hardware for the Gospels cost £10,000 and the programme about £25,000. The library has created similar programmes for the Leo-

nardo Notebook, the Strozzi Hours and the Diamond Sutra, which will be unveiled near the works concerned on April 21.

Another inspiration for the project was research among library users. "When we asked people what they wanted, they said 'How lovely it would be to turn pages,'" a spokesman said.

Each screen page can be manoeuvred and magnified so that details as small as a leaf depiction of a bird can appear as large as the pages themselves. Moving the "magnifying glass" over any area instantly calls up a text or audio narration that explains what the viewer has focused on and changes the moment that a new area is explored.

The library said that high-resolution digital technology combined with animation and television techniques provided a perfect medium. The original manuscript was neither damaged nor degraded by the process. "The less it is made



Visual aids: examples of pages from the Lindisfarne Gospels that will be reproduced digitally on screen

available to people, the better it is preserved," said Clive Izard, head of the library's audio-visual services, who devised the programme.

Eventually, the reproduced books could be seen anywhere in the world. "This will make

them far more available to more people," Mr Izard said. Asked whether the technique may dispense with the need for works to be put to the risks of travelling, he said: "You could equally argue that it increases the awareness of

antiquarian books and manuscripts. It might inspire demands for more exhibitions."

Although the imagery is not like the real thing, the technology offers an added insight into an object, bringing it to life and involving the onlooker

in a way that has never been possible before. Although the page-turning is silent, so that the crackle of vellum is absent, Mr Izard said that he tried to devise a visual stiffness. "We played with sound, but we didn't find it added anything."

## Plan to cut TA would damage historic units

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSALS to cut the Territorial Army would drastically reduce the historic yeomanry regiments that date back to the Napoleonic wars.

Under the proposals produced by regular army officers as part of the Government's strategic defence review, the TA would be transformed into a specialised force, with more resources expected to go into the reserve medical services and logistic units.

The cuts would reduce the TA from 57,600 to 40,000 volunteers. The plan, which has yet to be considered by ministers, would cut the five yeomanry regiments to just half a squadron with 75 officers and men. The 36 TA infantry battalions would be reduced to five.

The only surviving yeomanry unit, probably elements of the 200-year-old Royal Yeomanry, based in London, would be given a specialised role during nuclear, biological or chemical warfare, operating armoured vehicles that can detect non-conventional attacks.

The proposed restructuring of the TA is so drastic that ministers are expected to come under increasing political

pressure to reject the army package and to save some of the yeomanry regiments and infantry battalions. The first hint of political opposition came yesterday when the Commons Defence Select Committee, chaired by Bruce George, Labour MP for Walsall South, questioned General Sir Michael Walker, Commander-in-Chief Land Command, whose operational responsibilities include the TA reserves.

Mr George said there would have to be "very good reasons" for approving the proposed 30 per cent cuts in the TA which had been reported in *The Times* on Monday.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said that although it made good accounting sense to cut the TA because there was no longer a threat to the United Kingdom from Russian Spetsnaz commandos, there remained a strategic role for the reserves.

One key aspect was the link that the TA provided between the public and the Army which would be almost eliminated if the military proposal to cut the TA infantry battalions to five was approved by ministers.

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# Student loans buy a comfortable life at top universities

THE comfortable lifestyle of have-it-all students at the country's top universities is disclosed today in a survey of undergraduates. One in four student loans is used to pay for summer holidays, and one in six loans is spent on items such as hi-fi, computers and cars, or invested on the stock market.

Many students have "an impressive array of the latest technology", researchers said after questioning 6,350 finalists at the 19 top universities. More than half had a television, a quarter owned a video recorder, one in three had a personal computer and one in six a mobile phone.

Nearly a quarter had a car. One in ten said, however, that they would have been unlikely to take their course if they had had to pay tuition fees, rising to one in four of those from poorer families.

Students at Oxford and Cambridge were the least likely to be deterred from university by tuition fees. Just 6 per cent at Oxford and 7 per cent at Cambridge said fees would have discouraged them, compared with the average of 16 per cent and the highest rates of 31 per cent at Loughborough and 27 per cent at Newcastle.

Car ownership was greatest at Southampton University, at 38 per cent of final-year students, followed by 36 per cent

## Better-off undergraduates are buying holidays, cars, computers and mobile phones, or investing their low-interest loans to collect bigger returns, reports David Charter

at Exeter. The lowest level of car ownership was at Cambridge (7 per cent).

The biggest take-up in student loans and the highest levels of debt were found at Leeds University. Ben East, editor of *Leeds Student*, invested his first-year student loan of £1,150 in a hi-fi. He graduated last summer and owes the Student Loan Company £3,981.

A lot of people invest their student loans because you make more money on the interest. But it is so tempting to spend it when you get all the money in one go," he said. "It is so true that there are people swanning around in cars and with mobile phones, but it is also true that there are people with no money at all who are really having to scrape by. I would not have been able to have a good time at Leeds without the student loan."

Some 79 per cent of students at Leeds and Southampton had student loans, which are available to all and not means-tested, against the average of 69 per cent. The average debt

of a Leeds graduate was £3,150, followed by £3,040 at Sheffield and £2,980 at Southampton.

Final-year students at Strathclyde were the hardest-working, spending an average of 33.3 hours studying. The average was 27.8 hours. The lowest average was 21.8 hours at Warwick.

Student leaders said the survey gave further evidence of the deterrent effect of the £1,000 means-tested tuition fees, due to be introduced by the Government in September, when it will also scrap the student grant.

The researchers asked the final-year students whether they would have started their courses if they thought they would leave college with debts of £10,000 or more, the level of debt forecast for graduates who pay fees. Nearly half of those currently receiving grants said this would have made them unlikely to take up their course.

The survey, sponsored by Channel 4 and Marketing, was conducted in December by High Fliers Research.



Simba with Suki at the kennels: "It was amazing to see the cub playing with all the animals"

# Dog returns home with a friend

A DOG making a return visit to a rescue kennel arrived with a friend who had also been in need of comfort. Suki, a Japanese akita hunting dog, has been helping to raise an abandoned lion cub.

Suki came from Akita Rescue, at Manastay Kennels, Huddersfield, which takes in stray, unwanted and mistreated akitas. Along with another year-old dog, Scooby, it found a new

owner in David Hughes, a research assistant at Glasgow Zoo.

During the winter, a lioness at the zoo kept leaving her cub, Simba, outside in bitter weather. Mr Hughes said: "We decided to hand-rear him and that involved some contact with other animals to socialise him. He moved in with me and the dogs at the zoo complex. They looked after him, let him sleep

with them and played with him." Simba is soon to get his own enclosure, but in the meantime he travelled with the dogs when Mr Hughes brought them to visit their old kennels, which are run by Josephine Brown and her family.

She said: "It was great to see them again. It was amazing to see the cub playing with all the animals. He takes to them extremely well."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Tent girl murder appeal is rejected

The man serving life for the rape and murder of Sophie Hook, 7, who was abducted as she slept in a tent in a garden of her uncle's home in Llandudno, has lost his appeal against conviction. The Court of Appeal rejected the argument by lawyers for Howard Hughes, 32, that the verdict was unsafe because the trial judge should have excluded from evidence a confession which was "grossly inadequate", made while in custody by a man suffering from a mental incapacity.

### Farms pay rise

More than 100,000 farm workers are to receive a 3.25 per cent pay rise, giving an hourly rate of £4.26, after talks between the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Farmers' Union. Casual workers will receive a 5 per cent rise to £3.21 an hour.

### Boys in sex case

Five schoolboys were sent for trial accused of sexually attacking a 14-year-old girl. A boy aged 14 and two aged 11 are charged, with attempts to rape and two other 11-year-olds with indecent assault. They will appear at Manchester Crown Court on April 29.

### Couple gassed

A couple have been found dead in bed, days before a second wedding ceremony. Tauseef Ahmed, 23, and his wife, Qula, 20, of Nelson, Lancashire, are believed to have been overcome by fumes from a faulty gas heater. They first married in Pakistan.

### Clean break

The Welsh Tourist Board is sending a fleet of grimy lorries and vans to London and Birmingham with "clean air" is just two hours away" scrawled in the dirt on the back. Its advertising agency hopes to persuade drivers stuck in jams to book a break.

### £1 landmark

The National Trust has bought an 84-acre red and white tower near Fowey, Cornwall, for £1. Golden Head daymark, built in 1832 as a navigational aid, is a mile from Daphne Du Maurier's house Menabilly, the model for Manderley in *Rebecca*.

### Snappy number

A platinum-plated camera made by Leica in tribute to the photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson is expected to fetch up to £30,000 for a French charity when it is auctioned at Christie's, South Kensington, on June 11. Its serial number, 2281908, is his birthdate.

# Oxbridge heads back top-up fees

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING Cambridge college head has added his voice to yesterday's call from an Oxford provost that students should pay a premium to attend the country's top two universities.

Gabriel Horn, Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, said that, without a "top-up" fee, Oxford and Cambridge's historic collegiate system of teaching and research will be eroded.

The heads of Oxford's colleges, meeting yesterday, responded to the Government's plans to cut funding for the collegiate system by more than a third during the next ten years with "glum resignation". Geoffrey Marshall, Provost of The Queen's College, Oxford, who told *The Times* yesterday that he believed top-up fees should be charged, said the college heads were "appalled" by the plan.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, announced

that the extra £35 million received by the two universities for college fees from local authorities would instead be paid by the Higher Education Funding Council and subject to "efficiency gains" for up to ten years.

Oxford and Cambridge have requested a meeting with Mr Blunkett, but "an audience has not yet been granted", a spokesman said.

Professor Horn, writing in the *New Statesman* tomorrow, says that Oxford and Cambridge will be forced to take more wealthy overseas students or to cut back on research, unless the Government relaxes its opposition to means-tested top-up fees. He adds: "Is it in the national interest that one of the most distinguished academic institutions should become progressively less available to home students?"

Leading article, page 23

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# Archbishop takes control in the heavens

Ruth Gledhill reports on how the ex-RAF serviceman George Carey was able to reach new professional heights flying a Harrier jumpjet

THE Archbishop of Canterbury took over the controls of a Harrier jumpjet at 10,000ft on a pastoral visit to an RAF base. Yesterday the pilot who handed him the controls admitted that he had "prayed quite hard" before their flight.

Dr George Carey, who was an RAF wireless operator during his National Service, was at Wittering in Cambridgeshire when he took off on one of the most testing missions of his archiepiscopal career. Afterwards, he said proudly: "I think I'm one of the few people who's not been sick in a Harrier going up."

The Archbishop was examined for medical fitness and donned the requisite fireproof flying suit to become the second man in a two-man crew. He was given detailed instructions regarding the fighter's flying equipment, so that he could respond in case of trouble. He was given particular advice on how to and operate essential controls should the pilot lose consciousness in the vertical ascent. This included advice on use of the ejector seat.



Squadron Leader Huckstep — who prayed "quite hard" — shakes hands with his co-pilot for the day

He was then belted into the cockpit, flown up and induced into looping the loop, the hover, banks and rolls. He went low-flying at seven-miles-a-minute, 250ft above ground level, and was put through the Harrier "viffing" manoeuvres, which became famous during the Falklands conflict. The pilot, Squadron

Leader Chris Huckstep, a committed Christian, let the Archbishop take over the controls at 10,000ft and sat while Dr Carey banked, turned and flew the plane at 360mph without mishap.

"It was a most enjoyable and exhilarating experience," Dr Carey said on his return to earth, having flown over Har-

rogate, across the Pennines and past Windermere.

Dr Carey, who was visiting the base in his capacity as bishop with overall responsibility for the Forces, said: "I did not know what I was letting myself in for, I became aware of the complete professionalism of the pilots."

Dr Carey is not a "nervous"

flyer and does not habitually resort to prayer during take-offs and landings on his frequent visits abroad. But he did admit he had been to church that morning before this particular flight.

"I had to have a medical and was very thoroughly briefed about where we were to go and what we would be doing," he said. "I was taught the use of the ejector seat and basic controls in case there was a problem."

"They were practising low-level flying and doing some of their regular exercises. We flew over the Windermere area and the hills near by. I was very impressed by the calm and skill of the pilots. They practise until it is second nature. They are very serious and responsible and do not take risks at all."

Squadron Leader Huckstep, 39, a father of five, sat in the front of the cockpit of the two-seater jet. He said he sat and "prayed quite hard" with his wife, Gill, the morning before the flight, asking God that all would go well with the Archbishop, that there would be no accidents or incidents, and that Dr Carey would enjoy the flight.

Squadron Leader Huckstep added: "We did a few gentle aerobatic manoeuvres and I demonstrate the use of 'viffing', which is using the nozzle to increase the turn rate. We came back and did a short take-off off the strip and



Ready for take-off: the Archbishop was given lessons on the ejector seat, just in case the pilot blacked out

a circuit round for a vertical landing.

"I have been in the Air Force since 1980 and a Christian since 1984. I felt so privileged, both to meet the Archbishop and also to fly him. I admire and respect him so much as head of the Church of England and am very much aware of all his

responsibilities. It was a privilege to share something of the Air Force life with him."

He said he occasionally prayed before and during flights, particularly on difficult missions, such as his recent flights to deliver jets to HMS *Invincible* in the Gulf. "It is possible to be a completely professional air force

pilot and to be a completely committed Christian at the same time," he said.

Dr Carey added: "I am delighted that the station will shortly be back to full strength with the safe return of all number one fighter squadron personnel from their deployment in the Gulf." Wing Commander Mike

Harwood said: "Most people find Harriers awe-inspiring. I do, and I fly them every day. It is partly the acceleration. It is also that they can roll around their own axis like no other aircraft. Most people would have been feeling pretty sick. The Archbishop did not. He was terrific. I take my hat off to him."

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## Karaoke kings step into Elvis's blue suede shoes

By Nigel Hawkes  
SCIENCE EDITOR

AN OXFORD scientist has invented a karaoke machine that enables singers to sound like Elvis Presley. Ken Lomax, a phonetics researcher, programs the machine with the patterns of Presley's voice. When a customer sings, the timing of the song is his own but the voice has the timbre and pitch of the king of rock'n'roll — or of any other chosen performer.

Dr Lomax's "voice morpher" uses a template of a performer's voice built up from their recordings. Their pronunciation, tone and timing are superimposed on the more amateurish sounds made by the average karaoke customer to produce a blend. That means even the most awful of singers can sound something like Elvis.

Dr Lomax had earlier proposed using his invention to create recordings of long-



Presley could be singing along in karaoke duets

dead singers performing songs written after their deaths. His latest idea has the support of Isis Innovations, the company that promotes inventions made at Oxford and which is trying to find him commercial partners.

There are two problems to

solve. *New Scientist* reports. It takes a long time to develop the templates and requires a lot of processing power to blend the voices in real time. Commercial versions will be more powerful, making that possible.

Mark Taylor of Isis Innovations says it is early days but when a practical machine emerges it should be possible to choose the share of the song contributed by the performer and by the karaoke user. "If I could be half you and half Elvis," he said, "or it could be 10 per cent you and 90 per cent Elvis."

Dr Lomax has also produced templates for Maria Callas and Kiri Te Kanawa, raising the prospect of pub customers trying to sing great arias as well as *Blue Suede Shoes*.

Sony, Sharp and IBM are evaluating the system. One possible application would be to make computerised voices sound less mechanical.



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# Superbug linked to antibiotics in animal feed

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

A CLEAR link between the use of antibiotics in animal feed and the emergence of "superbugs" in hospitals has been established for the first time.

Doctors have repeatedly warned of the danger, but proving it has been more difficult. The emergence of antibiotic-resistant strains of common bacteria is often blamed on excessive use of antibiotics in medicine, rather than in animal feedstuffs.

Now gene tests on bacteria in the gut of people, pigs and chickens have shown that resistance to one particular antibiotic has moved from animals to humans. The new studies, carried out by Henrik Wegener of the Danish Veterinary Laboratory, suggest that

a common type of bacterium found in the intestine developed resistance to vancomycin, a widely used antibiotic, when a similar drug was used in animal feed.

Antibiotics are given in animal feed because they typically increase the growth rate by 5 per cent. Dr Wegener now believes that they should be banned as growth promoters.

Enterococci — bacteria in the gut — became resistant to vancomycin in 1986, and the resistant forms spread throughout Europe and the US. They are not usually dangerous except in patients with poor immune systems, so these new strains have not caused as much alarm as vancomycin-resistant *Staphy-*

*lococcus aureus*, known as "superstaph", which has since begun to appear.

Dr Wegener showed that the resistance moved from animals to humans by isolating the gene responsible for vancomycin resistance in enterococci from people, pigs and chickens. He found that the gene — apart from disarming vancomycin — contained a mutation.

Bacteria in poultry from several countries all carried one type of mutation, pigs carried another. Humans carried both.

This means, says Dr Wegener, that humans must have got the resistance from animals. If the traffic had been in the other direction, animals would show both variants.

Avoparcin, the antibiotic used in animal feeds, was banned in 1997, but animals are now being given another antibiotic, virginiamycin, which is very similar to the new drug, Synercid, used to replace vancomycin in human beings. Studies have already shown that some enterococci in farm animals are resistant to Synercid. "The story about avoparcin and vancomycin is rewriting itself," Dr Wegener told *New Scientist*.

Roche Products, the company which makes avoparcin, remains unconvinced. "These are interesting data, but I'm not sure you can categorically state from them that it is one-way traffic of resistance," said Dr Tony Madd, of Roche.



The model Jodie Kidd in an Yves Saint Laurent outfit at the opening of the National Gallery's north rooms, redeveloped with help from the fashion house. Behind her is a work by the 17th-century artist Pierre Mignard

# Air mix enhances cancer drugs

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

A MIXTURE of oxygen and carbon dioxide reaches parts of a cancer tumour that normal air cannot reach, researchers have discovered. The combination, known as carbogen, doubles the amount of drug which gets into a tumour and keeps the drug active for half as long again.

The treatment, using a drug for breast and colon cancer called 5-fluorouracil, involves making the patient breathe 95 per cent oxygen and 5 per cent carbon dioxide.

John Griffiths, who leads the research team at St George's Hospital Medical School, South London, said yesterday: "A tumour creates its own network of blood vessels to bring oxygen to cancer cells, but the network is not very well organised and there are patches where blood vessels are collapsed or leaky. These are twilight zones which drugs can't usually get into, but carbogen can temporarily transform the inefficient blood network into a fast track to cancer cells."

Twice as much of the drug gets into the tumours because the carbogen causes the blood vessels to dilate, increasing their volume. The tumours then eliminate the drug more slowly than normal, increasing the time it is effective. Cancer cells took a third longer than normal to grow back after treatment stopped.

Gordon McVie, director-general of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "This is a simple and cheap way of improving the performance of cancer drugs."

## BLOOD TRANSFUSION ERRORS

Preventable mistakes during blood transfusions are causing death and serious illness, according to the first annual report of a nationwide monitoring scheme (Ian Murray writes).

In the past year, 81 out of 169 patients who reported becoming ill after a transfusion were found to have been given the wrong type of blood. The errors led to one death and nine serious illnesses.

The report also records the death of 12 patients that were not attributable to bad practice, of which nine

were caused by the wrong type of transfusion.

One person had been given blood that was infected with hepatitis and another patient had contracted HIV.

The report by the National Blood Transfusion Service covers only 94 of 227 hospitals invited to take part in the voluntary reporting scheme.

"The most common mistake takes place when those collecting the blood for a transfusion fail to make a correct identity check with the patient and the wrong transfusion

# Iceland bans genetically modified foods from own brand

By Robin Young and Nigel Hawkes

THE frozen food chain Iceland yesterday became the first British retailer to ban genetically modified foods from its own-brand range.

Malcolm Walker, the company chairman, announced that, from May 1, the own-brand goods on sale in Iceland's 770 stores would be guaranteed genetically unmodified. He said the move was intended

as a challenge to the indifference among British retailers to the introduction of genetically modified soya, developed in the United States to enable increased use of agricultural herbicides.

Iceland intends to use soya from only Canadian and Brazilian sources and has hired an agency to trace genetically modified food.

Mr Walker said: "Genetically modified ingredients are being introduced by stealth via giant

biotech corporations. The Government has colluded by taking no action and food retailers and manufacturers have rolled over and accepted the situation. The long-term health and environmental effects of genetic engineering of foods are unknown. Consumers are being used as human guinea pigs without their knowledge."

Iceland has introduced labeling to draw attention to its guarantee and is urging the food industry to

find suppliers of conventional soya outside the United States.

In January the British Retail Consortium, representing 90 per cent of retailers, said it was abandoning its request that US soya producers should separate the genetically modified crop from non-modified varieties. European Union scientists have accepted that the use of modified soya carries no risk.

Friends of the Earth, describing

genetically modified crops as "Frankenstein food", wrote to leading retailers yesterday, calling on them to follow Iceland's example.

Julie Sheppard of the Consumers' Association said: "We have been repeatedly told by the food industry that what Iceland has achieved is impossible, impractical or too costly, but this initiative shows what commitment and determination can do."

Professor Derek Burke, who was

chairman of the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes, which gave clearance to use genetically modified soya, said alarmist talk about risks was unjustified and could do lasting damage to a technology that had many benefits.

Genetically engineered soya beans and maize are already being imported on a large scale from the United States. Soya is present in about three fifths of all processed foods. It is included in products as

diverse as chocolate, bread, baby foods and beer.

The modified soya, made by Monsanto, contains a gene taken from a soil bacterium that makes it resistant to the weedkiller Round-up, also made by Monsanto. That means farmers can spray to control weeds without damaging the crop. In 1997, 16 per cent of the United States crop was genetically modified. That proportion is expected to rise to almost a third this year.

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# Carmakers reject doctrine of 'small is cleaner'

### Linking a £50 cut in road tax to engine size makes no sense to the motor trade, reports Kevin Eason

BUDGET plans to offer tax breaks to owners of small cars, because they are thought to be environmentally friendly. But last night exposed as flawed.

Manufacturers were baffled by Gordon Brown's statement that he proposed a £50 reduction in vehicle excise duty for "the cleanest and smallest cars" on the road.

That was interpreted as meaning a tiered system in which cars with small engines would win tax reductions for their owners.

Owners of so-called "gas-guzzlers" face paying more than the present £150-a-year road fund licence fee as a penalty for burning more petrol and diesel, resulting in greater tailpipe emissions of carbon dioxide, thought to contribute to global warming.

Buyers of Ford Fiesta 1.3i hatchbacks might assume that their car was small enough to satisfy the Chancellor's

requirements. But statistics compiled by the Department of Transport and Environment show that it pumps out up to 171 grams of carbon dioxide a kilometre. A 1.8-litre Mitsubishi Carisma, using the latest technology, emits just 152 grams — as little as some of the smallest cars on the road.

If the Chancellor introduces a tax break, possibly for engines of 1.4 litres and smaller, the Fiesta driver could save £50 a year, yet the Mitsubishi owner would have to pay full tax on a model clearly among

the cleanest and most frugal on the market. Owners of diesel cars would also be penalised. An Audi A3TDi is a sporty two-door hatchback, yet it has the lowest emission rate in the government league table, at 138 grams of CO2 per kilometre. However, it has a 1.9-litre turbo-charged diesel engine.

Motoring organisations and manufacturers claim that technology advances will create a tiered engine-grading system irrelevant almost as soon as it is introduced.

Edmund King, campaigns manager at the RAC, said: "To assume that every small car is a miracle of green technology is utterly simplistic in this day and age. Many medium and large-size models are packed with complicated technology which puts them among the cleanest."

"Owners of bigger cars already pay a penalty any way through having to buy more petrol, which is heavily taxed, so what would be the point of introducing graduated excise duty? This is one of those classic cases where someone in the Treasury had an idea so that the Government could show its green credentials, but

### THE GREEN MOTORIST'S CAR GUIDE

(Grammes of carbon dioxide emitted per kilometre travelled, (litres per gallon in brackets) Source: New Car Fuel Consumption Figures from DETR, January 1998)

TOP TEN CLEAN CARS			THE ECONOMY CAR		
1. Audi A3 1.9TDi	138	(65.4)	Ford Ka	152	(49.6)
2. Volkswagen Corsa 1.0i	138	(65.7)	Citroen ZXV	152	(49.6)
3. Volkswagen Polo 1.0	139	(65.8)	Peugeot 106 1.5D	152	(49.6)
4. Citroen Saxo 1.2D	139	(65.8)	Fiat Cinquecento	146	(46.3)
5. Peugeot 106 1.5D	139	(65.8)	Ford Ka 1	145	(47.9)
6. Fiat Cinquecento	146	(46.3)			
7. Ford Ka 1	145	(47.9)			
8. Renault Clio 1.2	149	(44.3)			
9. Honda Accord	152	(46.6)			
10. Nissan Micra 1.0	152	(47.1)			
11. Mitsubishi Carisma 1.8D	152	(44.5)			

THE TOP FIVE GAS GUZZLERS			NEW BREED		
1. Lamborghini Diablo	576	(11.5)	Ford Ka	152	(49.6)
2. Ferrari F50 Maranello	530	(12.3)	Citroen ZXV	152	(49.6)
3. Aston Martin Vantage	511	(13.4)	Peugeot 106 1.5D	152	(49.6)
4. Bentley Turbo RT	458	(14.5)	Fiat Cinquecento	146	(46.3)
5. Mercedes CLK600	400	(16.7)	Ford Ka 1	145	(47.9)

OLD-FASHIONED			TECHNOLOGY OF THE FUTURE		
Citroen ZXV	152	(49.6)	Mitsubishi Carisma 1.8D	152	(44.5)
Peugeot 106 1.5D	152	(49.6)			
Fiat Cinquecento	146	(46.3)			
Ford Ka 1	145	(47.9)			

## Treasury gears up for huge windfall

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN set out the biggest rise in motoring taxes by any Chancellor, creating a multi-billion-pound windfall for the Treasury over the next five years. Britain's position as one of the most expensive countries for drivers will be reinforced by the Budget rises in petrol duty, higher road tax for large-engined cars and a tax increase on free fuel for company cars.

The Treasury's plans to increase petrol duty by 6 per cent above inflation for each of the next five years will bring an additional £13 billion revenue for the Government, according to conservative estimates.

Ministers expect to raise up to £600 million a year within five years by increasing the tax on company car drivers who receive free fuel. Some 800,000 drivers are given free fuel and pay an average £250 flat rate of tax on the benefit in kind.

That tax is based on pump prices but the Chancellor announced that the taxable value would rise each year by 20 per cent more than the pump price. This will more than double the tax within five years.

Within two years, a driver of a diesel car with an engine larger than two litres will pay an additional £4 a week in tax, which is likely to rise to £10 a week by 2003.

the scheme has not been thought through."

David Miles, spokesman for Mitsubishi, added: "The new technology we have introduced means there is not always a correlation between size and performance or fuel consumption. The danger is that people can latch on to such a loose statement when carmakers who have to deal with worldwide rules on pollution and emissions need firm guidelines."

Carmakers have warned the Treasury for months not to implement wide-ranging tax measures without consulting them first, to avoid the sort of

confusion thrown up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget statement.

They point out that new cars should not be the target of the Government's desire to clean up the air in congested towns and cities. Instead, old and badly maintained models cause the most pollution, the oldest 10 per cent pumping out half the toxic emissions.

They might have tiny engines but without the latest technology they are simply not as clean as new cars. Jan McAllister, chairman of Ford or Britain and a leader of the Government's Green Vehicles Task Force, said that a single

20-year-old Ford Fiesta would emit the same amount of exhaust waste as 50 modern Ford Ka city cars.

Carmakers are increasingly turning their attention to designing small but spacious city cars which are fuel-efficient and low-polluting. The Ka is one of the first of the new breed but even more adventurous models are planned by most major manufacturers.

Within seven years, cars on sale will be a mix of advanced direct-injection petrol cars — similar to Mitsubishi's Carisma GDi, which runs on an extremely lean petrol-to-air mixture in the cylinder — and

hybrid vehicles that are powered by a combination of small diesel engines and electric motors.

"It is a complex debate and we want to talk to the Chancellor over the period of consultation so that all of these factors are taken into account, because things will change rapidly towards the middle of the next decade," Mr McAllister said.

"We do not want extra bureaucracy which is not needed and tax tiers which are unworkable. The technology is already here and cleaner cars are being introduced all the time."

# Brown will find virtue has a higher price in years to come

GORDON BROWN is not quite as fiscally virtuous as he claims, but he is still much less sinful than his Labour predecessors. The Chancellor prides himself on his prudence and responsibility. Shedding the old "tax and spending" image was a crucial part of the reinvention of the party as "New Labour".

The two previous Labour Governments had presided over sharp rises in public spending and taxation. During the first Wilson era from 1964 until 1970, public spending rose as a proportion of national income from 36.5 per cent to a peak of more than 43 in

1967-68 before falling just over 41 after a series of "cuts" packages introduced by Roy Jenkins following the 1967 devaluation. Over the same period, the tax burden rose from less than 30 to 37 per cent.

The Labour Governments of 1974-79 inherited a rapid expansion in public spending and inflation that they initially made much worse. Spending leapt from 43.5 per cent to a post-war peak of more than 49 in 1975-76 before Denis Healey asserted control. Labour left office with spending down to 44 per cent. The tax burden rose from just under 34 per cent to a peak of nearly 37 two

## RIDDELL ON POLITICS

years later, before slipping to just under 35.

Mr Brown has been determined to apply a tight discipline from the start rather than have to raise the tax burden or be forced to put the brakes on spending. But he has increased both spending and taxes. The spending control total has not been changed, but last July Mr Brown added £2.3 billion over two years, mainly on Welfare to Work and local authority spend-

ing under the capital receipts initiative. However, in the financial year just ending, there is expected to have been a £1.5 billion shortfall, including nearly £500 million from a lower expected contribution to the European Budget.

The Government has chosen to interpret its commitment to the inherited Tory plans for two years in a flexible way. We are now told this meant sticking to the two years combined, so the shortfall this year is financing an expansion of £1.5 billion next year. However, the increases for education, health and public transport really only alleviate the tight-

planned squeezes and higher inflation. There is no great loosening of spending controls. The strength of the economy has anyway cut spending on unemployment. So after falling to below 40 per cent for the first time since 1991, the spending share is expected to show little change next year. Provided that spending does not grow much faster than the trend of the past 20 years, its relative share should not rise.

Several tax increases have been announced since last May, while receipts have anyway been buoyant, partly thanks to the introduction of self-assessment. But the

Treasury's Red Book admits that a likely small rise in the tax burden in the coming year is "largely because of Budget measures". On present plans the tax burden is expected to rise slightly more in the following two years.

It is not just that Mr Brown has been more "prudent" than his predecessors. He has benefited enormously from the strong economy he inherited. These figures could look much worse if there is a recession. Moreover, much will depend on the comprehensive spending review, expected before the summer recess. So far the Government has been able to

spend more on what Mr Brown still coyly calls the "people's priorities" without having to decide on real cuts in other programmes. We are now hearing much less from ministers about switching spending from social security to education and health. Getting people back to work costs money and welfare reform does not save money in the short-to-medium term. It has been relatively easy for Mr Brown to be virtuous so far. He will have to work much harder to live up to his Iron Chancellor image in future.

PETER RIDDELL



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# Buyers hurry to beat stamp duty deadline

Agents working overtime on deals over £250,000 while Inland Revenue keeps an eye on tax dodgers, write Rachel Kelly and Frances Gibb

HOUSEBUYERS were yesterday rushing to complete their purchases before the stamp duty increases come into effect on Tuesday, while those who cannot beat the deadline might have been tempted to find ways around the new levels.

Budget changes mean that stamp duty will be levied at two per cent for houses that cost more than £250,000 instead of 1.5 per cent, and at three per cent instead of two per cent for those that cost more than £500,000. The buyer of a £250,000 house will have to pay £5,000, an extra £1,250. Those buying homes costing more than £500,000 will now have to pay £15,000 stamp duty, an extra £5,000.

Julian Standing of agents John D. Wood said agents and solicitors were working overtime. "Someone close to exchanging is now inevitably trying to complete as soon as possible. When confronted with an extra amount of tax it is natural to want to rush to avoid it."

To scrape in at the present rates of stamp duty, a buyer

must exchange and complete their transactions by midnight on Monday, March 23. March is one of the busiest months of the year for house purchases, with about 250,000 houses changing hands.

One avoidance method could be to price a house at £499,000 or £249,000. A second could be for agents to value separately the house and its movable contents. Tony Pardoe, from country agents Carter Jonas, which deals with the top of the market, said: "If, for example, a house was for sale for £510,000 and its movable contents were valued at £20,000, then it might be possible to value the house at £499,000 and the contents at £10,000, thereby avoiding the

tax." Mr Pardoe warned that the room for manoeuvre on valuations was limited by the 1991 Property Misdescriptions Act, which requires valuers and surveyors to provide accurate valuations and not to mislead buyers. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Institute of Valuers and Auctioneers also require their members to provide accurate valuations.

The Inland Revenue said: "It would only be possible to value the contents and the house separately if the contents were moveable, and the price attached to them was reasonable."

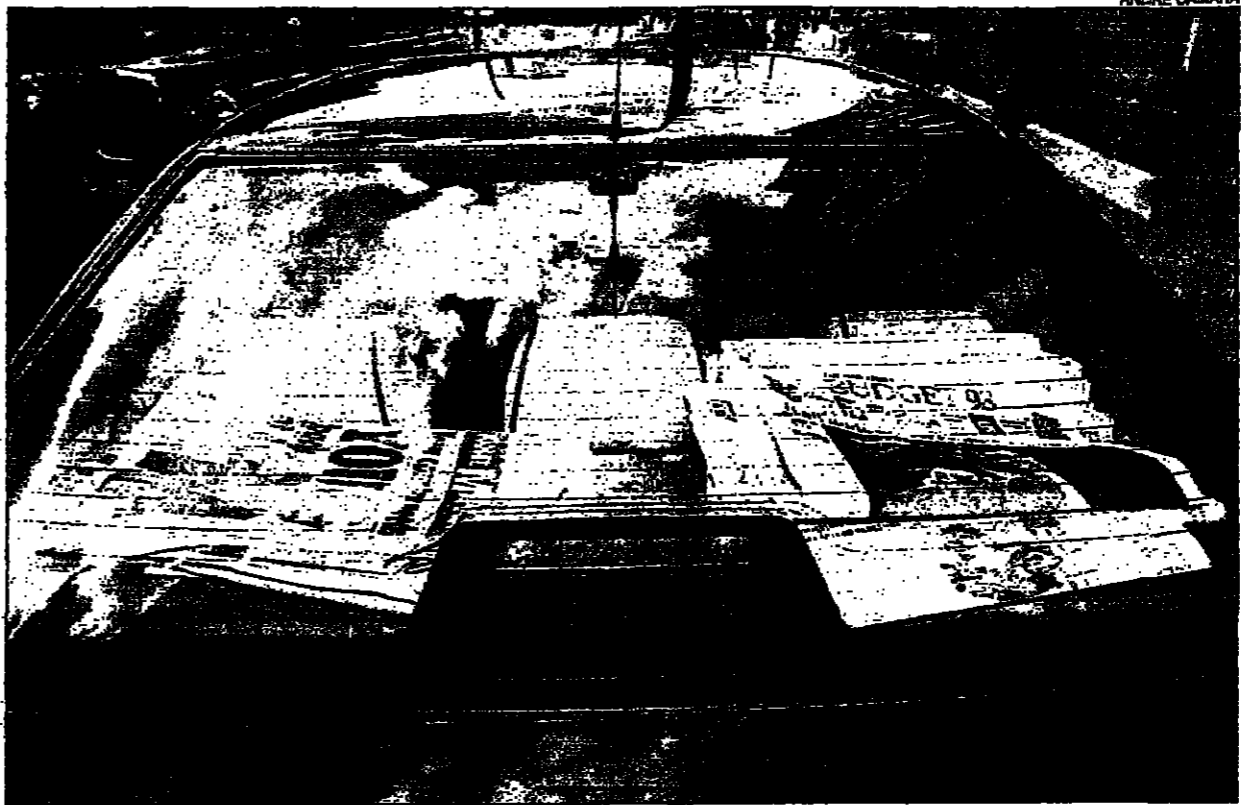
It would be impossible to try and avoid the duty by dividing a property into lots. "We would treat the separate

smaller transactions as one large one." The spokeswoman said that it would also be impossible to put different lots into the names of different beneficiaries. "Again we would look at whether the different lots were part of a single transaction."

Lawyers yesterday were also doubtful about the possibility of evading the tax. James Carter, a tax partner with Speechly Bircham, said: "It is very difficult for residential property. In the commercial sphere, the have been ways over the past ten years of avoiding stamp duty by setting up 'declaration of trust' schemes offshore, so that the transfer effectively happens abroad and is not liable to stamp duty."

The courts had recently ruled such a scheme was not valid, he said. Such a scheme would not be acceptable to most mortgage companies, so could only be considered by cash buyers.

A more attractive option for buyers of commercial property would be to purchase the property by buying shares in a



Reported speech: Gordon Brown has plenty of Budget views to read as he leaves 11 Downing Street in his Rover

company which owned a property. Large sums could be saved in stamp duty because of the differential rates.

If a property cost £20 million, stamp duty would be £600,000. If shares were bought in a property-owning company the stamp duty at 0.5 per cent would be £100,000.

But Michael Hayes, a tax partner with Macfarlanes, said: "Most of the clever dodges involving parcelling up a property and selling bits separately were hit on the head a few years ago." It would cost buyers more in legal fees to work out ways to try to avoid the duty than to

pay it in the first place. Chris Jarman, of Payne Hicks Beach, said: "The only answer is to complete by Monday. I would not advise people to embark on ways of dubious validity to try to avoid stamp duty. They may not work and could cost them more in the long run." Sophie Hamilton,

property partner with Frere Cholmeley Bischoff, said: "It is very, very difficult. The only ways — executing the documents offshore — are really only open to cash buyers because banks and building societies would never go along with that. So it is not open to the ordinary house buyer."

# Benefits rebel says Labour has found its soul

By JILL SHERMAN  
CHIEF POLITICAL  
CORRESPONDENT

THE minister who resigned over Labour's decision to cut single parent benefits said yesterday that his party had "rediscovered its soul".

Malcolm Chisholm resigned as Scottish Office Minister on December 10, the day that 47 Labour MPs rebelled against the Government's plan to cut single parent benefits by £5 a week. At the time he said he could not vote for "an attack on some of the poorest women in society".

But yesterday Mr Chisholm said he was delighted that the Chancellor had restored the benefit cut by giving single mothers an extra £2.50 for their first child and £2.50 for every child under 11. "The Labour Party has rediscovered its soul after the temporary madness that afflicted it on December 10."

In the Commons debate on the Budget the Tories accused Gordon Brown of making families and businesses pay for increases in spending through higher taxes. Peter Lilley, Shadow Chancellor, said: "By the end of this Parliament he will be taking nearly 3 per cent more of national income in tax — that



Chisholm: resigned over single parents

is the cost of Labour's tax programme. That is the cost of their stealth taxes."

Mr Lilley said that every change to the welfare state introduced by the Government since the election had increased costs. Overall, the benefits bill was about to rise by another £10 billion by the end of this Parliament. "Instead of cutting social security spending, they are increasing it."

According to a Budget analysis commissioned by the Tories, every household would be worse off next year. Mr Lilley said. In the year after, only those with incomes of less than £16,000 would be better off.

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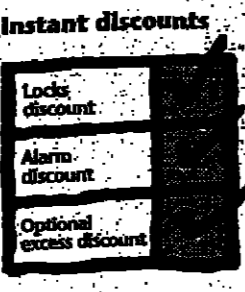


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# Cook unrepentant as Israelis boycott send-off at airport

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN DAMASCUS AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL delivered a final snub to Robin Cook yesterday: not one Israeli official was on hand to bid the Foreign Secretary farewell at Ben Gurion airport, near Tel Aviv, as he left for Syria on the next stage of his Middle East tour.

As Israeli politicians gathered in the Knesset to vent their spleen against his alleged pro-Arab bias, Ehud Barak, leader of the main opposition Labour Party, said he was pleased that a "technical scheduling problem" had prevented his own planned meeting with Mr Cook from going ahead.

Mr Barak said that Mr Cook had demonstrated "poor judgment" in insisting on visiting Har Homa, the contested biblical hillside in annexed east Jerusalem, where Mr Cook was mobbed by angry Jewish settlers calling him an "anti-Semite".

The Foreign Secretary was given a warm welcome in Damascus, despite driving snow, and saluted for taking a stand at Har Homa. Farouk al-Sharara, the Syrian Foreign Minister, said: "What happened in Israel illustrates in concrete fashion that the Israeli Government doesn't care about peace in the Middle East."

Mr Cook does not regret the confrontation at the Israeli settlement. He told journalists that it was right for the European Union to demonstrate its concern.

Israelis said yesterday that Benjamin Netanyahu's abrupt

cancellation of a dinner on Tuesday night was a calculated move, intended to bolster the beleaguered Prime Minister's domestic standing in the face of continued American pressure. A confrontation with the EU, particularly with the British, plays well with voters now recalling the 50th anniversary of Israel's underground fight against the British mandate authority.

What probably sparked Mr Netanyahu's anger, however, was Mr Cook's refusal to accept a

## 6 Cook might yet look back on Har Homa as the graveyard of his political career?

briefing from a second Israeli official at Har Homa who represented the Jerusalem Mayor's office. British officials emphasised that Britain does not recognise the annexation of Arab east Jerusalem and could not agree to anything that implied Israeli sovereignty over the disputed site.

The Israeli press had a field day lambasting Mr Cook's performance, claiming that he had doomed the EU's attempt to play an expanded role as a Middle East

peacemaker. *The Jerusalem Post* asked whether "Throbbin' Robin", as it called the Foreign Secretary, "might yet look back on Har Homa as the graveyard of his political career".

*Yediot Aharonot*, the biggest-selling Israeli paper, headlined its front-page account of the diplomatic fiasco: "Cook forgot that the British mandate ended." The daily *Hatzetz* claimed that the Foreign Secretary had gone even further out of his way to upset the Israelis than had originally been realised.

However, Mr Cook did hold substantive discussions with both Mr Netanyahu and Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister, who is looking to Europe to support Israel's tentative proposal for a long-delayed implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 calling for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Mr Cook discussed this at length in Damascus and also Beirut but made clear that, while Britain would welcome a unilateral Israeli withdrawal, it saw great difficulty in treating the Lebanese track separately from negotiations with Syria on withdrawal from Golan.

President Assad was adamant in talks with Mr Cook that Syria would not allow any uncoupling of the two issues, and Mr Cook recognised that Syria could veto any conditions that Beirut might agree for policing the security zone if the Israelis were to withdraw.



Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Farouk al-Sharara, his Syrian counterpart, in Damascus

## Rifkind condemns lack of diplomacy

BY NICHOLAS WATT  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ROBIN COOK'S immediate predecessor launched a stinging attack on the Foreign Secretary yesterday, saying his public spat with the Israeli Government had played a question mark over his ability to carry out his job.

As Tony Blair threw his weight behind the Foreign Secretary, Sir Malcolm Rifkind said Mr Cook had made himself virtually "persona non grata" in Israel and diminished British influence in the Middle East.

Sir Malcolm described his fellow Scot as a "very, very able man". But he told BBC Radio 4's *The World At One*: "Diplomatic skills are not automatically to be found with ability. Either he is going to have to learn them or he is increasingly going to find himself in this sort of predicament."

Lord Ford of Westwell, also once Foreign Secretary, was more sympathetic, saying: "I am sure he was right to stick to the visit because if he [Mr Cook] had abandoned the visit he would have shown that he was abandoning the policy that Britain and the European Union have held for some time."

In the Commons Mr Blair rebuffed Tory taunts, saying that the Foreign Secretary's European Union-agreed itinerary had been "entirely justified".

Derek Fatchett, the Foreign Office Minister, accused Sir Malcolm of breaking the convention that the Opposition did not criticise Ministers during overseas visits.

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## Junta 'death squad' will protect Pope in Nigeria

FROM SAM KILEY IN LAGOS

THE security for the Pope's tour of Nigeria this weekend will be in the hands of a secretive local major at the head of a highly trained 3,000-man private army used to prop up Abuja's junta.

The unit, known as the Special Bodyguard (SB), was established under the command of Major Hamza al-Mustapha to protect an increasingly isolated General Sani Abacha, who took power in a 1993 coup. It has been described by Wole Soyinka, the Nobel literature laureate, as a death squad. It is accused of being behind numerous political murders, including the killing of 67 young army officers in April 1995.

The bodies of the dead men were hidden in a mass grave near the Lower Usman Dam in Abuja, the capital, not far from the route the Pope will take to meet General Abacha. Roman Catholic clerics said

the pentiff was certain to ask General Abacha to release political prisoners, including Oluksun Obasejo, the former head of state, and Chief Moshood Abiola, who is widely believed to have won the annulled 1993 presidential elections. Both men are serving life sentences for their part in an alleged plot to topple General Abacha.

A northern Muslim, Nigeria's military leader has been showing increasing signs of paranoia, having alienated both the Muslim aristocracy and influential southern Yoruba leaders, leaving a diminishing clique of friends whom he can trust.

"He is living in a conspiracy of a limited few against the whole constituency of the country," said Segun Jegede, director of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights. General Abacha has placed increasing power in the hands

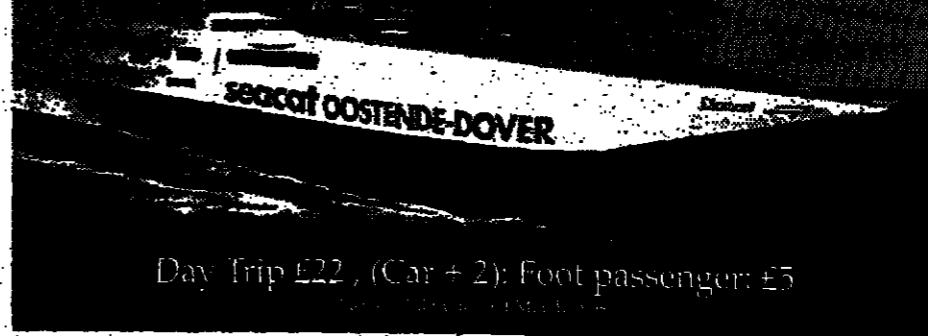
of the SB, which is answerable only to him. The Pope's safety is traditionally the responsibility of his Swiss Guard and their undercover experts. But the Vatican has also trusted the pontiff's wider security needs to the host nation.

The SB, whose members have been highly trained in Libya and North Korea, has earned a reputation for its brutal efficiency.

General Abacha is anxious to capitalise on the visit. "He is hoping that [it] will be the start of a rehabilitation which will culminate in the August elections when he will stand as the only presidential candidate," a Western diplomat said.

Lagos: Thirty-one members of the Urhobo ethnic group were killed in a massacre in Bayelsa, southern Nigeria, by members of the Ijaw group, witnesses said. There has been no official confirmation of the death toll. (AFP)

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# German trial to lift lid on doping

FROM ROGER BOYES  
IN BONN

THE recipe of the Leipzig "vitamin cocktail" spiked with banned steroids, and the secrets of communist doping policy will be exposed in a trial of six former East German sports officials, which began yesterday in a crowded Berlin courtroom.

All the observers, including representatives from international sports organisations, seem to realise that the trial will raise critical questions about competitive international sport. It is also being watched closely by all the men and women who were pushed out of contention for medals by competitors stuffed with drugs. They are demanding a reordering of the old medal tables and record books.

Four coaches — Dieter Lindemann, Rolf Gläser, Volker Fischer and Dieter Krause — and two doctors, Dieter Binus and Bernd Pansold, have been charged with causing bodily harm to minors by giving them steroids, and face up to three years in jail. All six worked for the SC Dynamo Berlin swim-



Gläser, one of four coaches accused of giving steroids

ming club. Like all Dynamo clubs in Eastern Europe, it was associated with the Interior Ministry and the secret police.

The trial is expected to last until July and is likely to set off an avalanche of repercussions. The Berlin prosecutor investigated 1,047 suspected cases of doping, partly on the basis of Stasi (secret police) files, and has opened 90 formal cases against 680 accused.

After the swimmers, there will be the light athletes. Almost 190 light athletic trainers, doctors and activists have been charged. Then will come coaches from other sports: rowing, weightlifting, canoeing, winter sports, gymnastics, football, boxing and cycling. Handball, shooting, judo and wrestling have been investigated by the authorities, but they did not find enough evidence to pursue individual cases. Only sailing and rhythmic gymnastics were entirely clear.

Those in the dock yesterday were small fry but, according to the indictment, were involved in the practical administration of banned substances to young athletes. After the collapse of communism they, and thousands of other compromised officials, became the mainstay of sports training in united Germany; they seemed to have foolproof methods and, if one added West and East German medal tallies, it could be predicted the coaches would help to make the new Germany a sports superpower to rival America.



Katrin Krabbe competing in Tokyo in 1991. She used "clean" urine to evade detection in tests

German Institute for Physical Culture and Sport in Leipzig, which had developed anabolic steroids as "supportive treatment" for athletes as early as 1973. The East German aim was to find a course of treatment, and masking drugs, that would protect the athlete from pre-tournament testing. Light ath-

letes such as Katrin Krabbe were also encouraged to use special vaginal bags containing somebody else's urine so they would test clean before a race.

A comparison of the medals tally for the 1968 and 1976 Olympic Games shows that the system brought results.

Roger Boyes is the co-author (with Simon Freeman) of *Sport Behind The Iron Curtain*.

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
1968 Mexico	9	6	7
1976 Montreal	40	25	25

Bryant's Eye, page 49

# Publisher dodges Hitler book ban

BY ROGER BOYES

THE postwar German ban on the publication of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* has been dodged by a company offering the book on double compact disc. The text is read, without commentary, by Ekkehard Schall, the son-in-law of Bernhard Brecht, the late communist playwright.

This backdoor form of publication is already stirring passions. Ignatz Bubis, the elected leader of the German Jewish community, says that publication of Hitler's work — musings on his youth, the Jews and Germany's First World War defeat — should be out of the question as long as many Germans remained unclear about the true goals of National Socialism. The Bavarian Government, which holds the copyright of Hitler's estate, is also against the CD.

Romeo Karl Hass, a former SS officer who was sentenced to life imprisonment in Italy for his part in the 1944 Ardennine Caves massacre, is under house arrest to prevent him fleeing. (AFP)

# France 'proposed Italian occupation' to keep Nazis out

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

FRANCE invited Italy to occupy the South of France early in the Second World War in a bizarre and ultimately vain attempt to avoid occupation by Nazi Germany, according to the granddaughter of Italy's then monarch, King Victor Emmanuel III.

Princess Maria Gabriella of Savoy, who now lives in exile in Switzerland, said letters from Edouard Daladier, then French Foreign Minister, to the King had "disappeared". But it was "well known in the family" that Daladier had asked the King if Italy would consider moving into southern France to foil German invasion plans.

Italy was ruled by the Fascist dictator Benito Mus-

solini, but was still a monarchy, and was seen by many as a lesser evil than Hitler's Reich. Mussolini was deposed by the King in 1943.

Princess Maria Gabriella, 57, told *Corriere della Sera* that she knew of three or four letters from Daladier to her grandfather, written in 1939 and 1940.

As Prime Minister, Daladier signed the Munich Agreement (with Neville Chamberlain) in 1938 which led to Hitler's occupation of the Sudetenland.

But when war broke out the next year, by which time he was Foreign Minister, Daladier realised that Hitler had designs on France itself and made his appeal to Italy. France fell to German forces in June 1940 and Daladier was imprisoned by the collaborationist Vichy regime.

The Italian Government earlier this month appealed to the exiled Royal Family to clear up the mystery of the "lost archives of the House of Savoy" before its expected return to Italy this year.

Walter Veltroni, the deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture, said "large tracts" of documents were missing from Turin, the traditional seat of the House of Savoy, which ruled Italy from unification in 1870 until the abolition of the monarchy in 1946.



Daladier: jailed under Vichy collaborators

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**Vatican snubs 'saintly' queen**

Madrid: Spain's Queen Isabella, who led the expulsion of the Jews, has become one of the first casualties of the Vatican's recent apology over the Roman Catholic Church's treatment of the Jews (Giles Tremlett writes).

The Vatican has suspended indefinitely the beatification process of the pious Queen of Castile who, with her husband King Ferdinand of Aragon, first united Spain under a single Christian crown.

Up to 150,000 Jews were forced to leave Spain in 1492 after the monarchs ordered them to convert to Catholicism or get out. Many who remained as secret practicers of the Jewish faith were burnt to death on the orders of Tomás de Torquemada, the Dominican priest whom Isabella appointed to head the Inquisition.

**Villagers battle for right to steal brides**

THE centuries-old Caucasus tradition of young men kidnapping and marrying village girls is making a comeback in the rugged mountain region, where locals have warned Moscow not to interfere in the revival of ancient customs.

In a move that has been welcomed by traditionalists and rejected by women's rights advocates, the tiny republic of Ingushetia has appealed to President Yeltsin to stop federal officials investigating the common but illegal practice of "wifemapping".

"We recently requested the President to order federal authorities to stop interfering in our customs," said Rustam Chahiyev, a representative of the Ingush Government in Moscow. He added: "This practice should be controlled by local authorities, who understand local needs."

For centuries, hostage-taking has been an integral part of life in the Caucasus and even now the authorities in the breakaway region of Chechnya are battling to halt a spate of kidnappings of for-

**Tiny republic in Caucasus calls on Yeltsin to let 'wifemaps' continue, Richard Beeston writes in Moscow**

igners. Seizing brides is somewhat different, but rooted in the same traditions. Often young men and women want to get married but the suitor is unable to pay the dowry. So the groom "kidnaps" his bride and the two effectively elope.

Confirmation that the tradition has been well established for generations came recently from the southern Caucasian state of Azerbaijan, where Mirzahan Movlamov, aged 121, recalled how he met his first wife in 1905, when he was 28 and she was only 12.

"I stole her," he told *The New York Times*. "I rode into the next village on my horse and grabbed her. I was in the Tsar's cavalry at the time. I loved her very much." Islam, an Azerbaijani in his twenties, confirmed the custom is still

going strong and recalled how he grabbed his wife one evening in less exotic circumstances from her village outside Baku. "All we had to do was stay together for one night and the family would not take her back after that," he said. "I did not have much money in those days and only had an old car, so my future wife and I spent our first night together driving along tiny country roads with her father in pursuit behind us."

The amusing side of the custom formed the heart of the classic Soviet comedy, *Captive Bride of the Caucasus*, starring Russia's best-loved comedian, Yuri Nikulin. In the film, a local leader hires three incompetent thieves to kidnap a beautiful Russian girl on her summer holidays and force her to marry the local

Caucasian boss. The film has a happy ending — she falls in love with one of her young Russian captors — but rights campaigners insist that often the real-life stories are not so funny and can end in tragedy for the brides.

The return of the custom is seen as a serious blow against women, who run a greater risk of being forced into marriage against their will.

The kidnapping of brides in the male-dominated Caucasus world also coincides with a revival of strict Islamic traditions and the declining influence of secular values from the authorities in Moscow.

"These customs may sound quaint to some people, but they are illegal, and as long as Ingushetia is part of the Russian Federation it must abide by the law like anyone else," said Violeta Kosheva, a Communist deputy on the parliamentary committee for women and the family. She said tolerating the practice would lead to abductions of underage girls and forced marriages.



Albanians signal victory as more than 50,000 marched through Pristina yesterday

**Kosovo protester is shot dead as violence spreads**

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

AN ETHNIC Albanian was killed yesterday as Serbian police apparently opened fire on demonstrators in Pec, Kosovo's second city. A doctor there confirmed that he had seen one man killed.

He added that he had treated five other people for gunshot wounds, including a 14-year-old girl.

The upsurge in violence came as tens of thousands of Albanians again took to the streets of Kosovo's largest towns and coincided with a warning given by Strobe Talbott, the US Deputy Secretary of State, that the "viability of the Yugoslav state" was being put in jeopardy by the Serbian Government's treatment of its Albanian minority.

In the strongest language used so far in the crisis by a Western diplomat, Mr Talbott said that the six-nation Contact Group is "calling on Belgrade to cease its brutal repressive campaign which involves 'ethnic cleansing', summary executions and mass expulsions".

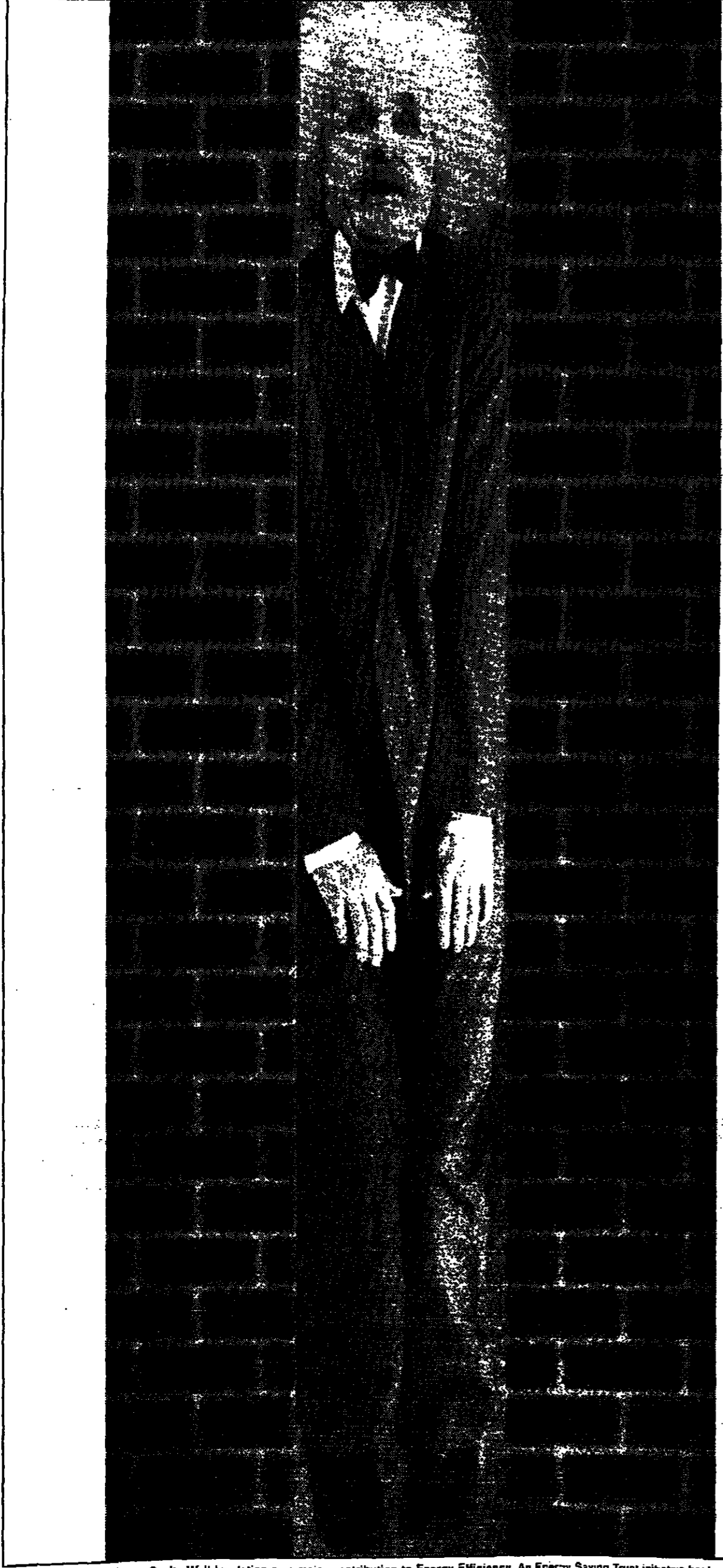
Speaking in Sofia after talks with Ivan Kostov, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Mr Talbott added that bodies such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe should be allowed into Kosovo to "assess the atrocities". Today is the Contact Group's deadline for President Milosevic of Yugoslavia to remove his special forces from the region.

The Serbs, meanwhile, were putting their side of events to international journalists. Radmila Mileticjevic, the Information Minister, said Belgrade had asked Red Cross forensic scientists to inspect sites of police crackdowns. "Who shot whom can easily be scientifically determined, with no doubt," she said, claiming that women, children and elderly people who died in Prekaz village were used as "human shields" by Adem Jashari, the alleged Kosovo Liberation Army leader killed with 21 family members inside what she called his clan fortress.

The minister said evidence would prove Jashari shot those who tried to escape.

Her colleagues in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, last night denied that Serbian police in Pec had opened fire on demonstrators.

□ Ankara: Five countries in southeastern Europe — Albania, Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania and Turkey — yesterday agreed to create a multinational rapid intervention force to deal with Balkan crises. (AFP)



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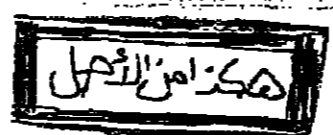
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# Court battle exposes Mississippi's dirty deeds against civil rights leaders

FROM TOM RHOODES IN WASHINGTON

ANOTHER unsettling chapter in the Deep South's tortured history was revealed yesterday after the state of Mississippi released secret papers from an agency that spied, intimidated and employed illegal tactics to thwart the civil rights movement.

124,000 pages of files from the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, a body whose actions clearly demonstrated the determination of authorities from the 1950s to the 1970s to maintain strict segregation between blacks and whites.

Investigators noted the number-plates of cars parked at rallies, checked bank accounts of informants — many of them black Mississippians — and reported to the agency about planned demonstrations and marches.

The southern United States to face the past. After years of silence, the family of Martin Luther King is advocating efforts to discover whether James Earl Ray in fact was responsible for the assassination of the civil rights leader.

For Mississippi, however, the window to an earlier era is a particularly fraught experience. The state's long association with the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacy in general, portrayed in such films as *Mississippi Burning*, is one that many would just as

soon forget. And while the families of victims are insistent that the truth be revealed and, in some cases, wish to consider legal action against the state, some former activists believe the targets of such racism should be protected from further victimisation.

In one 1959 memorandum, Zack van Landingham, a commission investigator, recounted a conversation with Dudley Connor, a local lawyer, about Clyde Kennard, a black activist. "If the Sovereignty Commission wanted that Negro out of the community and out of the state they would take care of the situation," he quoted Mr Connor as saying.

# Face in Clinton crowd becomes reluctant star

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THESE days, given Washington's mania for scandal, just being a face in the crowd can be a bother.

Graydon Forrer has been questioned by the FBI about the relationship between President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, the former White House intern.

Mr Forrer was on the South Lawn of the White House on November 6, 1996, with hundreds of other Democrats for a "welcome home" gathering for Mr Clinton after his re-election.

club with a mixture of pride and bawdy banter. Mr Forrer said his family and friends were unwilling to settle for anything less than a steamy scene that could have come from a Jackie Collins novel.

Since then, his features have appeared around the world in countless newspapers, magazines and endless repeats of the television clip. His phone rings constantly. People he does not know offer him drinks. His parents in Arizona said they were concerned for his future.

Mr Forrer, formerly with the Department of Agriculture and now a consultant, reflected on his "15 minutes of fame" self-mockingly: "I worked for ten years in government on important issues, never striving for recognition. Then this happens, with no achievement required."



Graydon Forrer watches as the President hugs Monica Lewinsky at the White House in 1996



GREGG NEWTON / REUTERS

A peasant farmer wanders through the wasteland left by fires in northern Brazil. The burning of crops to clear land and abnormally dry weather are blamed for the fires which were burning

## Amazon fires spread

deeper into the Amazon rainforest yesterday, eating into the Yanomami Indian reservation. Officials flew to

land savanna — an area roughly the size of Lebanon — has been ravaged. Brazil has been accused of reacting too slowly to the disaster. (Reuters) Leading article, page 23

## Australia uncovers fake wine racket

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA'S most expensive and sought after wine was at the centre of a forgery racket yesterday after it emerged that six bottles of 1990 Penfolds Grange Hermitage were counterfeit.

Police were called in after the fake bottles were offered to a prominent Melbourne wine auctioneer with the promise of more to come. Last night Southcorp Wines, owner of Penfolds, said the discovery should serve as a warning for the wine industry to tighten security and export procedures.

"I think it has to be a warning to the whole industry. We would be naive to think that only six bottles had been produced," he said. Stuart Langton, the auctioneer, said that he did not know the identity of the man who brought the bottles in, but noticed several flaws on the labels and realised the bottles were fake. He believed the counterfeiter probably planned to sell the fakes in Asia, but after the financial crisis there were forced to pass them off in Australia.

## Mandela tackles race issue in rugby

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

THE contrasting faces of South African sport will be on display today when President Mandela appears in court to give evidence in a row over an inquiry into racism and maladministration in rugby.

Mr Mandela's court appearance comes after he decided to form a commission to investigate rugby, a move opposed by the white-run South African Rugby Football Union (SARU). He is being asked to justify his decision after Louis Luyt, SARU's president, argued that the commission violated his rights.

The union has been accused of financial irregularities, nepotism, mismanagement, a lack of commitment to rugby in poor black areas and racism. Senior government officials and sports administrators have called for racial quotas to be imposed on sports teams.

Criticism by acknowledging that it was no longer acceptable to field a South African national team without black representation. Makaya Ntini, the young bowler who makes his Test debut today against Sri Lanka, was plucked from the United Cricket Board's development programme and has made only one appearance for his national team.

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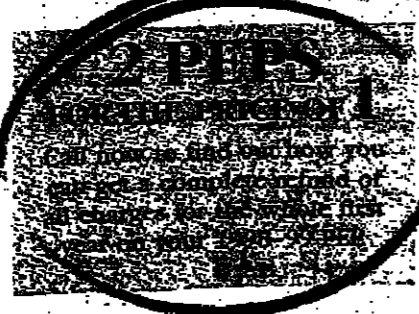
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# Indian leader renews nuclear bomb rhetoric

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA'S incoming Hindu nationalist-led Government gave pledges yesterday to discourage foreign investment in non-priority areas — a thinly veiled attack on new arrivals such as McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken — and to press ahead with development of a nuclear bomb.

Atal Behari Vajpayee, the new Prime Minister, refused to give a timeframe for carrying out an election pledge to conduct a nuclear test, saying merely that India intended to exercise the option to induce nuclear weapons.

This was for local consumption: India knows it would face economic sanctions by the United States as well as punitive measures by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank if it tested or built a nuclear device. For all the rhetoric, there is unlikely to be any significant change in the Indian nuclear programme.

The threat, however, has alarmed neighbouring Pakistan, which has, or is close to developing, a nuclear bomb. Any nuclear test by India would bring an inevitable response from Pakistan, taking South Asia a step closer to

nuclear conflict. The two countries have fought three wars. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is leading an 18-party coalition that will be sworn in today, pledged yesterday to re-examine the economic reforms introduced in 1992 to ensure that foreign investment focused on roads, water, telephones, electricity and other crucial areas.

Hindu nationalists were outraged by the arrival of American fast-food chains while investment in infra-



Vajpayee yesterday: vow to review reforms

structure remained minuscule. The party, forced to appease its coalition partners, has made no mention of any of the main demands of its extremist wing, aware that pushing such policies could bring down the Government.

It lacks a parliamentary majority and is unlikely to last a five-year term, although Sonia Gandhi, leader of the opposition Congress Party, has been remarkably conciliatory towards the incoming administration.

Her friendly comments may be designed to win friends in the BJP, which threatened during the election campaign to expose alleged corruption by the Gandhi family if it came to power.

The party said in a national agenda released yesterday that it would press the concept of *swadeshi* (self-reliance) to ensure that "the national economy grows on the principles that India shall be built by Indians". This concept is supported across the political spectrum. The reforms have been unpopular among voters, many of whom have suffered from reduced subsi-



Indian armed might on parade. The new Prime Minister has served notice that his Government reserves the option to develop nuclear weapons

dies on essential food and fuels.

The national agenda places emphasis on revitalising industry — much of it suffering from the impact of foreign imports percolated under the economic reforms. The party pledged to reform nationalised industries — a nettle that no government has dared

to grasp because of the power of trade unions and the impact that layoffs would have on the poor. Millions of public sector jobs in the bloated bureaucracy are preserved as a hidden form of welfare.

The party included some grandiose promises that will be all but impossible to implement, including pledges to

ensure 100 per cent literacy among children, to end malnutrition among the young, and to impose existing laws designed to ban child labour, which is rampant.

It also promised to introduce a "judicious mix of incentives and disincentives" to control the population, which is rising by 17 million to

18 million a year. The BJP made no mention of its election pledge to abolish Muslim personal law in favour of a uniform civil code covering all religions. Nor did it refer to the promised abolition of Article 370 of the Constitution, which gives special status to Kashmir. It said that it was seeking consensus to end the

adversarial relationship between government and opposition — an improbable hope. **□ Jammu:** At least two people were killed and ten injured when Muslim militants exploded a grenade near a polling station in the penultimate round of staggered national elections in Kashmir, police reported. (AFP)

# State prepares for drunken April fools as prohibition is abandoned

A DISASTROUS attempt to impose prohibition on the hard-drinking farming state of Haryana in northern India will be abandoned on April Fool's Day, when 1,000 liquor shops will open in a binge of legal drinking.

The same state administration that banned alcohol 21 months ago has authorised a spectacular return to the old ways. Every village will have a state-run alcohol shop within staggering distance, most of them cheerless concrete block houses with iron bars at the serving counter.

Some will provide *charpoyis* (string beds) outside the premises,

Christopher Thomas reports on a drinks ban that has served to produce lethal concoctions and encourage corruption

where customers can sleep off the effects of locally made rum and whisky, most brands of which are rough enough to bring tears to the eyes. The best that can be said of them is that they are extremely cheap.

Signs proclaiming the availability of that quintessential Indian phenomenon, "Indian-made for-

ign liquor", are being repainted and hammered back into place. They describe any drink not regarded as indigenous, principally whisky. Shops selling upmarket brands of Indian-made foreign liquor call themselves English wine shops. The nomenclature of booze can be baffling. The mood is festive as April

nears. It will be a wild day. Most Indians who drink, particularly in the Punjab-influenced north, prefer kick to quality, which explains why many drink advertisements emphasise the get-drunk-quick promise of particular brands.

Locally made beer is no treat. It is laced with glycerine to protect it from the heat, ensuring that even a modest tippler suffers the mother of all hangovers. Skilled barmen have developed a technique to remove the preservative by dunking the open bottle neck-down into water, allowing the glycerine, heavier than water, to dribble out, leaving a slimy trail.

Lorry drivers and others for whom day-long drunkenness is normal will be delighted that they will no longer be at the mercy of bribe-demanding policemen, for whom prohibition was a boon. Senior officers were among the biggest bootleggers. The army, never deprived of alcohol, occasionally helped out their friends with supplies of drink.

Middle-class residents of Haryana found themselves prey to blackmail by domestic servants who threatened to tell police about illegal drinking. "I stopped drinking whisky and soda because the servants found the soda bottles

and I was frightened they would report me," one tippler said. "I now drink whisky and water, but only after the servants have left at night."

Haryana's change of heart followed a poor local performance by the state's ruling coalition parties in the recent general election, mostly because people were disgusted by the abuses associated with prohibition. The state is almost bankrupt from the loss of excise duties. Practically every village built an illegal still to overcome the ban, producing liquor that was frequently lethal.

The Federation of Hotels and

Restaurants said the end of prohibition was the best thing to have happened in the state. Leading tour operators announced they would again arrange overnight stopovers for foreign tourists travelling through Haryana en route from Delhi to the "pink city" of Jaipur in Rajasthan.

Prohibition caused a slump in house prices in commuter areas of the state close to Delhi and estate agents say they now expect a price rise of 20 per cent. Everybody — except battered wives, who led the campaign for prohibition, and the police — seems to be glad that the ban is ending.

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# 'Asian culture' link in jet crashes

Investigators are examining whether deference may be deadly in the air, writes Tom Rhodes

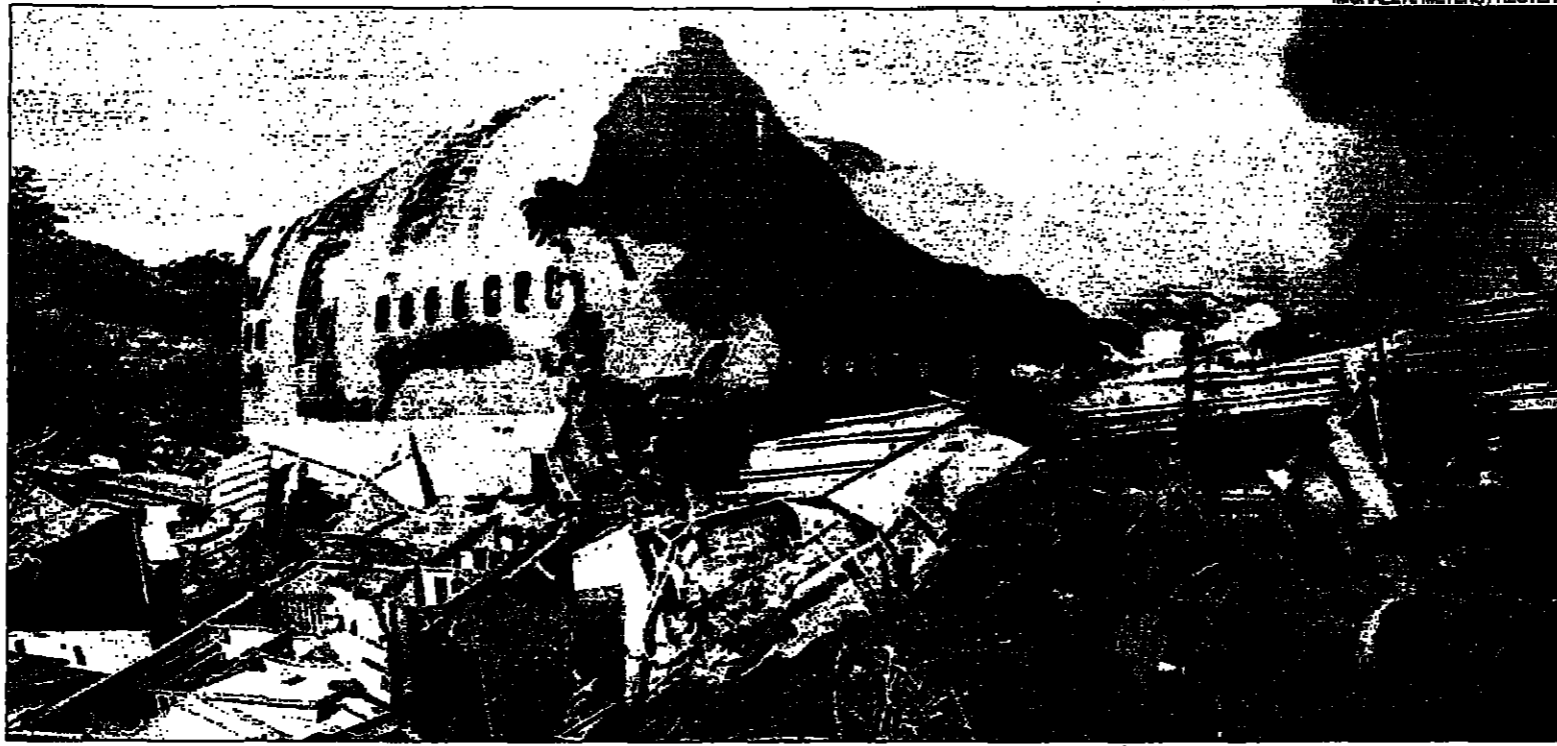
AMERICAN investigators of the crash of a passenger jet on Guam last August believe cultural deference to authority among the Korean crew and their unquestioning belief in the autopilot may have contributed to the tragedy in which 228 people died.

Before alarms sounded in the cockpit of Korean Air Lines Flight 801, descending steeply towards Agaña, the copilot and the flight engineer appeared to ignore their training by failing to alert the captain of danger.

Members of the National Transportation Safety Board investigating the crash told *The Washington Post* yesterday that they are concerned culture may have played a role. They also believe cultural factors may have caused other crashes. In the past decade, only five of the world's hundreds of airlines — four of them Asian — have had four or more crashes.

In the case of the Korean jet, the captain only switched off the autopilot seconds before the Boeing 747 slammed into a hill near the airport. The aircraft would have cleared the hill had it been just a few feet higher.

The board's hearings into the crash start in Honolulu next week, but fears of perceived racial overtones may prevent the safety board from even touching upon the question of culture. However, nu-



Wreckage of Korean Air Lines Flight 801 smouldering after the crash last August when the plane was approaching the airport on Guam

merous questions will be raised about whether the two subordinates on the flight deck deferred too much to their captain. The question may be crucial because eight out of ten air crashes have causes that have nothing to do with mechanical malfunctions. More than 9,000 people have been killed on commercial flights in the jet age.

Studies have found striking differences in the way pilots from different countries relate to their colleagues. One survey of commanders from 12 countries showed that Korean pilots were most likely to trust the autopilot, while those from the United States, Australia and Ireland repeatedly declined to use it.

Research has shown that

total reliance on automation is dangerous. Yet the study, by the psychology department at the University of Texas, found that in a survey of 5,879 pilots from 12 countries, 100 per cent of Korean pilots said they preferred the autopilot and always used it.

Another study of 10,000 pilots discovered that Koreans displayed greater shame when

making a mistake in front of crew.

In the last decade Air India had had seven accidents, Korean Air Lines, five; China Air, four; Garuda Indonesian, four; and US Airways, five. Korean Air Lines Flight 801 became the fourteenth Asian aircraft to crash in the past ten months, killing 856 people. Morton, Beyer and Agnew,

an aviation consulting firm, said most of the aircraft appeared to have flown into the ground and recommended that the industry form a taskforce to review the qualifications and training of Asian airman.

It appears, however, that the issue of culture is not paramount. The Japanese, with a similar social

hierarchy, have one of the world's best safety records, while numerous accidents in South America are blamed on high mountains, poor infrastructure and crowded skies rather than a specific cockpit culture.

Investigators will be examining why the crew of Flight 801 continued to employ the autopilot until the last minute. But they will also want to know why the crew was apparently confused about its approach altitude, why part of the airport's instrument landing system was offline and why an air traffic control altitude warning device was misprogrammed. The airline has complained that the bogus radio signals may have been confusing to the crew.

## Taiwan plane accident kills 13

Taipei: A Formosa Airlines plane carrying 13 passengers and crew crashed into the sea yesterday off northwestern Taiwan while flying on a newly opened domestic route, officials reported.

Lin Chien-chiang, a city councillor from Hsinchu, told state-run television that two bodies had been found by fishermen. Mr Lin

said fishermen heard an explosion around the time of the crash. Military radar was reported to have located the wreckage, and Sun Hung-ling, the airline's president, said that the chances of finding survivors were slim. Eight marine police boats were searching the wreckage, but helicopters were forced to return to base because of bad weather. (AFP)

## US offers China missile aid in return for arms export curb

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

AMERICA is planning to offer China access to US missile technology now barred under human rights sanctions if Beijing renews its agreement to end exports of weapons to Iran, Pakistan and other would-be nuclear nations. A delegation from the State

Department will present the proposed deal to Chinese officials next week, only a month after Washington protested against secret negotiations between Beijing and Tehran for the delivery of hundreds of tonnes of nuclear material to Iran.

In the past six years, the Chinese Government has several times promised America that it would not transfer missiles or related technology

barred under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). American intelligence claims that the Chinese have long broken these promises and the proposed deal is certain to provoke strong criticism among Republicans in Congress.

The proposal emerged in a letter written by Gary Samore, a proliferation expert at the National Security Council, which was leaked to *The*

*Washington Times*. "In essence, we would offer expanded commercial and scientific space co-operation with China in limited areas if China meets our conditions for joining the MTCR and controlling its missile-related exports to Iran, Pakistan, etc," the letter stated.

A final deal could be signed during President Clinton's proposed visit to China in June, but will first be presented in Beijing next week. The

MTCR prevents exports of missiles with ranges greater than 186 miles and warheads heavier than 1,000lb and US intelligence officials are insistent that China has continued to violate these guidelines and parameters.

In Beijing a new Cabinet strong on technocrats was endorsed yesterday by China's parliament one day after the economic chief, Zhu Rongji, was appointed Prime Minister

to succeed Li Peng. However, many of Mr Li's supporters have remained in positions of influence, particularly in law and order.

Luo Gan, once Mr Li's top aide in the Cabinet for state councils, is staying on to oversee the courts and police in the reshaped administration. "It's a compromise of different interests rather than a power struggle at this stage," one envoy said.

### WORLD IN BRIEF

## Britons held in Chechnya 'safe'

Moscow: Two British aid workers held captive in Chechnya are well, despite a botched attempt to free them on Monday, the security chief of the breakaway Russian republic said.

Jon James and Carilla Carr, who have been held for more than eight months in the northern Caucasus republic, were not hurt during the failed commando raid, said Islam Khalimov, the Security Minister. "We have information that the hostages were not injured at the time of the shootout and that they are in satisfactory health," he added. Two people were killed during the unsuccessful attempt to rescue them from the hostage-takers who seized them in July. (AFP)

## Cubans feared drowned

Miami: Four former Cuban national baseball team members and a coach were feared to have drowned after fleeing in a boat, days after three refugees died when their boat sank off Miami Beach (David Adams writes). Another star, who reached the US after being rescued from coral reefs, signed a \$6.6 million (£4 million) contract with the New York Yankees yesterday. But Orlando "The Duke" Hernandez told fellow Cubans: "Don't try to do what I did. It's too dangerous."

## Family given JFK items

New York: A collector whose John F. Kennedy memorabilia were scheduled for auction this week reached a settlement with the late President's children, agreeing to hand over several "intensely personal" items. Robert White agreed to give Caroline Kennedy and John F. Kennedy Jr two of their father's handwritten journals and a clock he kept in the Oval Office. They gave up all claims to other auction items. (AP)

## Farmers' suicides soar

Hyderabad: Nearly 150 farmers in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh have killed themselves in the past three months after pests destroyed their cotton and tobacco crops. K. Vidyadhar Rao, the state's Agriculture Minister, said. The farmers had been unable to repay loans taken out on the crops, he added. Last year, farms in the state also suffered a three-month drought. (Reuters)

## Algerians ponder abortion

Paris: Algerian religious authorities are considering a fatwa, or religious decree, allowing women made pregnant while held by guerrillas to have abortions. About 500 Algerian women have been kidnapped by Muslim rebels in the past six years, 300 raped by rebels and more than 3,700 killed. *La Nouvelle Republique*, an Algerian daily, said. (Reuters)

## Cambodia jails ex-Premier

Phnom Penh: Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the deposed Cambodian Prime Minister, was sentenced in absentia to 30 years' jail for allegedly conspiring with Khmer Rouge rebels to topple the coalition Government (Caroline Gluck writes). Two weeks ago, the Prince, who lives in exile in Bangkok, was given a five-year term for smuggling weapons.

## Killer to serve term at home

Brescia: Cristiani Pavesi, 25, was sentenced to spend 18 years under house arrest at his grandmother's home. The former Italian Air Force non-commissioned officer had been found guilty here of the murder of Nicola Gerardini, 23, shot with a hunting rifle at a restaurant. Pavesi owed his friend Gerardini 15 million lire (£5,000) for cocaine. (AFP)

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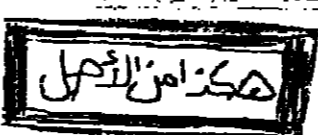
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**Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on the importance of fibre; synchronised menstruation; childhood migraine; the biochemistry of emotion and mysterious illnesses**

# Put more fibre in your diet

**R**obert MacLennan, the MP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross since 1966, is a lawyer educated at three of the world's most prestigious universities.

His reasoned and dispassionate opinions have won him the respect of all parties in the House of Commons. More surprising, given his academic background, is the depth of his easy and friendly relationship with the Highland farmers as he hobnobs with them at sheep sales and other constituency occasions.

Mr MacLennan this week presided at a meeting in the House of Commons to discuss the role of fibre in the British diet, and the devastating effect that the lack of it can have on two of the least-discussed parts of the human anatomy, the colon and the rectum.

The conference was heralded by supporting letters from the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, the Leader of the Opposition, William Hague, and Paddy Ashdown, the leader of the Liberal Democrats — all of whom are anxious that the British public should begin to look after their bowels rather better.

The audience did not know that it was only by the grace of God and some very competent surgery that Mr MacLennan was able to preside over the meeting from a platform seat, rather than by watching the proceedings from some celestial chair.

For Robert MacLennan nearly died from peritonitis complicating diver-

iculitis, and has been generous enough to say that we may quote his case.

Many cases of diverticulitis can be prevented by a high-fibre diet. Likewise, gastroenterologists reckon that the number of cases of cancer of the bowel could be halved if the British public would only consume more fibre. Their diet should include cereal fibre as well as fresh fruit and vegetables.

If, while in his constituency, Mr MacLennan had, like a good Scot, eaten a bowl of porridge each morning, or when at Westminster — lack of time notwithstanding — eaten breakfast cereals and later taken plenty of fruit and fibre-rich vegetables, he might never have developed diverticulitis, and so would have avoided a couple of major operations and an anxious period during which he hovered between life and death.

## The cases of cancer of the bowel could be halved

A diverticulum is a small mucosal sac formed from the colon's lining when it protrudes through a weakness in the gut wall.

Diverticulosis is the name given to the condition characterised by a multitude of diverticula, which may give rise to some discomfort and some excess wind. The only serious consequence, however, is when one of the blood vessels in the diverticulum bleeds.

Diverticulitis is the occasionally life-threatening complication of diverticulosis, which occurs when the gut contents are trapped in the sac and, once trapped, become the centre



The Scottish MP Robert MacLennan might possibly have avoided two operations if he had eaten a bowl of porridge every day

of an area of bowel inflammation. If the inflammation is only mild, appropriate antibiotics may cause it to settle.

The patient will then lose the localised pain and tenderness, which is often felt in the left lower abdomen. The pain may be associated with diarrhoea and, like any other infected process, feelings of being generally unwell and feverish.

In other cases, particularly if the patient is elderly — and only 15 per cent of diverticulitis occurs in people below the age of 50 — the condition may represent a surgical emergency. The inflamed sac may bleed or, like any other abscess for that is what it has become, it may burst, thus allowing infected bowel material to leak into the peritoneum (the bag in which our gut lies).

On other occasions a fistula, or

channel, may form between the perforated sac and an adjacent organ to which the colon has become adherent. Faeces may then escape along the fistula into part of the small intestine, into the uterus or the vagina, through the abdominal wall, into the groin or, most commonly, into the bladder. The swelling around the inflamed sac may then obstruct the gut.

If a person is suffering from a not too severe form of diverticulitis, then antibiotics and careful monitoring of the condition are still the treatments of choice, even after admission to hospital. And the majority will recover using these drugs and intravenous fluid. A barium X-ray should be taken, however, in order to confirm the diagnosis and to assess the extent of the

diverticulosis in the colon. About a quarter of those who need to be admitted to hospital with diverticulitis continue to deteriorate and end up needing surgery.

For some — as was the case with Mr MacLennan — the operation involves removal of a section of the gut. For other patients the surgery may well be limited to the draining of the abscess.

Thankfully, Mr MacLennan is now in much better health, and as he strides around Sutherland he feels better than he has done for years. At Westminster, meanwhile, he will continue to support the campaign to modify the British diet — for that little bit of extra fibre could save the National Health Service part of the £80 million a year as well as spare families an 'incalculable amount' of suffering.

## Why working women tend to ovulate in sync

ONE OF the unsolved mysteries of gynaecology is why women who live or work together tend to ovulate and menstruate at the same time.

The *British Medical Journal* has recently reported that research by two American psychologists at the University of Chicago has demonstrated that collecting an apparently odourless compound from the armpits of women, and persuading their colleagues to smell it, affects the time of ovulation and of their next period. The compound is thought to be a pheromone — a substance secreted by animals, and, it seems, humans, that affects sexual response in those who come in contact with it.

Researchers found that when the pheromones collected from a woman in the early part of her cycle were presented to other women, it accelerated their pre-ovulatory release of oestrogen hormones, which help to control the ovary from the pituitary. If the armpit extract was presented to women in the late stage of the cycle, it had the opposite effect and in this way the time of menstruation could be altered. In an office, however well air conditioned, enough pheromones are circulating for menstruation to become synchronised.

The interest in this research extends beyond the explanation of group female synchronous ovulation as it demonstrates that there are human pheromones, with possibly other powers.

## Mysteries of child migraine

A MONTH or two ago my three-year-old grandson Oliver was excited at the prospect of having lunch with his godfather. The adults enjoyed the lunch but Oliver was in no condition to do so. He had retreated to a darkened bedroom with a headache, abdominal pain, nausea and a temperature.

History was repeating itself. Thirty years ago I was frequently summoned by anxious hostesses to say that one of Oliver's uncles had developed a mysterious disease. My reassurance that my son was suffering from no more than familial migraine was usually greeted with scepticism.

Dr John Wilson, a consultant paediatric neurologist at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, recently reviewed in *Pediatrics* magazine the present state of knowledge about childhood migraine. He starts by warning that it can be confused with other conditions — any, in fact, which cause raised intracranial pressure. These include cerebral tumours, the second most common group of malignant tumours in children. Fortunately, as he explains, the likely cause of headaches and associated symptoms, without neurological signs, is not a tumour but migraine.

Migraine in children, unlike in adults, tends to cause a headache right across the forehead. Usually this lasts for only an hour or two and is relieved by sleep, but it can persist for longer. Between attacks, the child is perfectly well.

As in Oliver's case, the headache or abdominal pain is associated with pallor, nausea, a dislike of light and sometimes vomiting. In younger children, abdominal symptoms and nausea

may predominate, rather than a headache. Sometimes vomiting is so persistent that dehydration results.

Periodic migraine, another manifestation of the trouble in children, is perhaps the most difficult to diagnose. From time to time, a child with periodic migraine will look, in Dr Wilson's words, "ghastly, with a pasty yellow face and panda eyes". As with adults, there are trigger factors: these may be psychological



Sheer misery: migraine

or dietary, related to such substances as chocolate, strawberries and cheese. In fact, more than 40 substances have been identified at Great Ormond Street as being potentially provocative. Caffeine, a constituent of several fizzy drinks, is frequently a trigger which is overlooked. Children subject to migraine should eat regularly, for prolonged hunger frequently induces a headache. Dr Wilson thinks that in 10 per cent of cases, environmental factors such as petrol fumes or tobacco smoke may start an attack.

Reassurance for the parents and loving care for the child are often the only treatment necessary. Simple analgesics may be helpful and if the attacks become frequent, long-term prophylactic medication should be used to keep them at bay.

## A case of mind over matter

IT HAS never been doubted that emotion affects our bodily functions. If it didn't, we wouldn't salivate and, therefore, couldn't swallow our food, and we wouldn't cry, blush or make love.

Emotions also work in a much more subtle way and influence the cardiovascular system, digestion, skin and hormones, as well as having a profound influence on health through the immune system.

However, the split between the study of the mind and the body, and the paucity of scientific data on emotion, has caused many doctors to doubt its importance.

Dr Candace Pert, a neuroscientist at the Johns Hopkins University for many years, and now a research professor at Georgetown University, Washington, recently launched her book *Molecules of Emotion* at the Bristol Cancer Help Centre.

Dr Pert explores the bio-

chemistry of emotions and has demonstrated the way in which the body, including the immune system, responds to emotion.

Humans have a multiplicity of receptors which react to the presence and quantity of neuro-transmitters, which themselves vary according to the mood and motivation of the person.

DR PERT'S research is not only of interest to those who are already ill, but also to those who want to keep well. Nature has given us a natural healer, the immune system, which repairs our burns, cuts and injuries, repels disease-causing organisms and eliminates cancerous cells. Its function, and our health, may depend on how we feel.

*Molecules of Emotion, Why You Feel the Way You Feel*, by Candace B Pert (Simon & Schuster, £17.99).

## Lloyd-Webber pays a price

LORD LLOYD-WEBBER recently gave details in the *Radio Times* of the illness that has troubled him for the past ten years. Although his meteoric career during this time has continued to soar, this has apparently been at a cost. His doctors have now told him to tailor his workload to his health.

It seems that for a decade he has had flu-like symptoms, which have from time to time been attributed to everything from viruses, allergies and an amoebic infection. He has been investigated in a multitude of centres and has tried various treatments, including exclusion diets that have involved the renunciation of, at different times, milk, wheat and even alcohol.

The symptoms returned with a vengeance last September, so bad that he was unable to go to the tenth anniversary of *Phantom of the Opera*. Rest is now thought to offer the best chance of recovery.

Symptoms such as those of Lord Lloyd-Webber are not uncommon. The explanations given for them depend on the local culture and the approach of the doctor.

In France, symptoms of this sort are regularly ascribed to a disordered liver, in parts of America to a gut infection,

with candida elsewhere in the United States, and in the United Kingdom a viral infection is often blamed.

However, with a modified, but active lifestyle, most patients do recover.

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# No football... no cry



Many of Jamaica's football team used to play

barefoot. Now they face the mega-millionaires of World Cup soccer. Story: Barry Wigmore, left. Pictures: Chris Harris

The bus bounces out of the potholed car park of Jamaica's national stadium, past broken fences and a herd of scraggy goats foraging in the litter. Reggae-rap blasts from its open windows, a salute to Bob Marley who is frozen in bronze on a pile of yellow bricks across the road.

by the team chef. Mobile phones are deployed for the all-important business of talking to their women. The boys just love to burn up the phones.

The bus heads out of crumbling downtown Kingston towards neat, suburban houses behind palm trees and high walls. "The Road To France, 1998," say big signs along both sides. It has been a short, successful road so far for the Reggae Boyz, Jamaica's newly discovered football team. Three years ago they were bartenders, fishermen, factory workers and schoolboys.

Warren Barrett, the 26-year-old captain and goalkeeper, folds into a sofa, eating a papaya for dessert. He is a tall, graceful cut of a man with a shaven head, thoughtful eyes and a shy smile. Like just about every member of the squad, Barrett has known grinding poverty. His father worked in an asbestos factory. Until recently his mother was a housekeeper.

Barrett didn't own a pair of boots until, at 15, he was picked to play for Jamaica schoolboys against Honduras. "Before then I played barefoot," he says. "For important games I borrowed a pair of boots from a friend who was the same size as me."

A couple of years ago they had boots and a proper ball, but were still playing for their country for £35 a game. Now they face the mega-millionaires of World Cup soccer, stars on £25,000 a week. The Reggae Boyz have had a pay rise, but that's still more than they earn in a year.

Barrett didn't hurt his toes. "Only when I stubbed them," he grins. Even today, entering the national stadium through the front gates is a novelty for the national team captain. He has been more used to climbing the huge floodlight towers and dropping in — free — over the 30ft wall, as kids still do. "It's

ness at the moment, however, is that ultimate status symbol of the aspiring soccer star, the wheels. Many of the boys still cannot afford cars. Those who can park them in order of prestige, in the drive and on the lawn. The better the car, the closer it is to the house. Messam's is on the front row of the grid: a Nissan, between a BMW and an Audi. They have low suspension and wide wheels.

This is Reggae Boyz HQ, a five-room villa jammed with beds where the 20-man squad live, eat and breathe football. They spend more time here than with their families. While other teams take over luxury hotels and health spas for training, this is as good as gets for the boys — a sporting Animal House somewhere between Budin's and a boot camp. Drying shirts and shorts hang around the rooms, defying two housekeepers' efforts to keep things tidy. The best room in the house is a well-equipped gym.

Even beds fill most of the main living room. The rest of the space is taken up with a sofa, some armchairs and a few plastic trophies on a bookcase. A battered television shows American soaps, struggling against non-stop reggae from a large ghetto-blaster. The other rooms are filled with bunks. (Six UK-based players are spared such privations until the British season ends.) The boys jump from the bus, moving in easy rhythm with the music, to queue for showers. They emerge, with towels around muscular waists, to dry in the sun, munching pasta and jerk chicken cooked

for the inevitable trappings of soccer success. He has rings on his fingers, diamonds in his ears, chains on his wrists and a heavy gold necklace which carries not a medallion, but that far more useful accessory, the cellphones, in a quick-draw holster on his chest.

Green and another flamboyant character, 24-year-old Greg Messam, seem destined to have an impact on the World Cup either on or off the pitch. Messam has played in America and acquired a taste



Reggae Boyz Steve Malcolm (left) and Onandi Lowe take a break during training at the run-down national stadium. The 20-strong squad's headquarters is a five-room villa



Steve Green and Oniel McDonald practise ball skills

strange going through the front door," he says. Steve Green, 20, nods in agreement. "Until the World Cup, we were the bad guys. The sport somehow wasn't respectable," he says. "Cricketer and athletics were fine, but parents didn't want their kids to play football because there was no structure, no discipline and no financial backing. We still don't have a proper league."

He is one of six children who lived with their mother and father in a two-room shack until he fathered a son of his own and got married at the age of 18. Four months ago his wife gave birth to a second son. He has his names tattooed, in Gothic script, down his arm.

Man, we went through tough times as kids," Messam says. "We'd go days with no food to put on the table. It was rough. It makes you appreciate what you have. I don't ever want to live like that again. My mum and dad encouraged me to play football, but they never expected me to make money at it."

They didn't sound in his way, though, when he went straight from school into a local team with the dream of becoming a full-time professional.

"I was lucky," he says. "Someone saw me and I moved to Florida. Lots are still waiting." He sees the World Cup as an opportunity to show his skills to a wider audience. Like most of the young players, the English league or Europe are his goals. Pele — another barefoot kid from the backstreets — is his hero, Liverpool his favourite club. When he finishes with football, he wants to go back to college to make a business degree.

More important than busi-

ness at the moment, however, is that ultimate status symbol of the aspiring soccer star, the wheels. Many of the boys still cannot afford cars. Those who can park them in order of prestige, in the drive and on the lawn. The better the car, the closer it is to the house. Messam's is on the front row of the grid: a Nissan, between a BMW and an Audi. They have low suspension and wide wheels.

"You've got to have a car, man? Over here, that gets you respect," he says. "A dirty car, however, gains no respect at all. So an important visitor to the Reggae Boyz' camp is Bernard Leon, a young man with a quick business brain. As the squad's popularity took off, Leon set up a mobile car valet service, designed expressly to follow the footballers around. "Clean yo' car, man?" he asks as he wanders in on his daily round. "No, man. Not today, it's gonna rain," says Messam. "Inside, man, inside," says Leon. "I wash, buff, polish. Clean th' interior... clean the engine." Greg pulls out his phone and walks away. "No business today," groans Leon. "It's goin' rain." Barrett grins and shrugs. "Financially, we've a long way to go," he says. The arrival of their Brazilian manager, Rene Simoes — the diminutive professor who is the football brain behind their World Cup challenge — boosted top players' salaries to around £1,000 a month, still peanuts compared with earnings in the Premier League. "He made it clear to the federation that it's players who pack stadiums," says Barrett. "We're still not earning enough when you consider what we have done for this country. But we're getting there. We're comfortable." Comfort is relative. Barrett, one of a half-dozen married members of the squad, has contracts with Red Stripe beer and Puma sportswear. In a country which is strapped for cash, ingenious incentives are being offered. One is a promise from the Prime Minister P.J. Patterson. The grateful nation will provide a two-acre building plot and a low-cost home loan to each squad member. Then there are the added perks from showbiz — like the Hollywood fame and fortune achieved by the Reggae Boyz' heroes, the Jamaica bobsleigh team. They made it from a tropical island to the Winter Olympics without seeing much snow, and were immortalised in the film *Cool Runnings*. A film about the Reggae Boyz' rags-to-riches success is on the cards. A good run in the cup would guarantee it. A record contract is already a certainty. "Reggae is in the culture. We sing, we're alive. They go together, football and music," says Barrett. "That's why we're going to win the World Cup," says Messam.



Goalkeeper and captain Warren Barrett at HQ; soccer-crazy girls cheer their school side in a match at Kingston



Soccer-crazy girls cheer their school side in a match at Kingston

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# Can English be more than post-British?

Magnus Linklater says the UK has an identity crisis at its heart

I am not looking forward to Sunday's rugby international. Already I can see those massive English forwards thundering across the Murrayfield turf, driving the Scottish pack towards its own line, rocketing the ball down a three-quarter line that seems to move like a herd of gazelles. I'm not being defeatist, merely realistic. This is England rampant, the red rose on its chest, the pride of nationhood in its heart, a sight to fill Scots with the deepest foreboding.

Yet what is this? Far from the overweening self-confidence it expresses on the field, the English race, it seems, is suffering an acute identity problem. As its neighbours in Wales flex political muscle by calling for a cabinet and ministerial responsibility in their new assembly, and the Scots consolidate the powers of their parliament-in-waiting, the English are left, somehow diminished, in between.

Writing in the latest issue of *History Today*, Professor Jeremy Black of Exeter University, raises the question of how, as devolution erodes the concept of Britishness, the English are going to rediscover themselves. "Is their identity to be sought in regional assemblies and the European Union, and is there anything in between?"

He is not the first to pose the question, but it is one that is becoming ever more insistent. The English are having to rethink who they are, and it is proving rather more difficult than they imagined. For 250 years or so, they have not needed to worry much about it. Once the 18th-century Jacobite rebellion was finally suppressed on Culloden Moor, and the Union secured, a sense of Britishness emerged which, as Professor Black writes, "was essentially an extension of England".

The growth of the Empire, an enterprise in which Scots, Welsh and Protestant Irish joined with enthusiasm, meant that no one felt any great need to challenge English assumptions of superiority. Even Scots absorbed and seemed happy enough to submerge their identities in the course of his classic travel book, *Eastern Approaches*, the late Sir Fitzroy Maclean, a Highlander to his fingertips, describing his adventures in Russia in the 1930s, referred to himself quite openly as an Englishman. Once, when I pointed this out to him, he flatly refused to believe me.

Things are very different now. No self-respecting Scot would dream of referring to himself as English, and even the term British is beginning to seem remote. Emerging from beneath the British umbrella, the English have to ask whether they are a race apart, or simply an idea. As illustrations for Professor Black's article, *History Today* has come up with some familiar images — public school cricketers on the cover of a P.G. Wodehouse novel; a bulldog standing belligerently on a union flag; a village maypole. John Major once famously talked of warm beer and cycling old maids. Lord Tebbit

suggested cricket as a test of loyalty to the English way of life. But these are hardly definitions of nationhood. Professor Black prefers the phrase "a sense of Englishness", and traces it back to the transformation of Wessex into the Old English Monarchy in the 10th century. It evolved, he maintains, as a reaction against alien forces — whether it was the people resisting the influence of the Normans, or the barons restricting the power of the monarchy, as in the framing of the *Magna Carta*. The growing power of Parliament helped to define a clearly English identity, and wars — against France, Scotland, and later, Spain — all contributed to the growth of national consciousness. After the Reformation, Protestantism — or, perhaps more accurately, anti-Catholicism — gave that identity an even sharper edge. But it needed some helpful publicity as well. That great spin-doctor, William Shakespeare, probably deserves as much credit for giving the English a sense of who they are as the battle of Agincourt itself.

Is that really enough to go on? If the English have to reinvent themselves, can they do so on the basis of a few ancient symbols and a set of well-worn stereotypes? Not many of these latter have stood the test of time. The stiff upper lip has given way to outbursts of national emotion. Conformity of dress or ritual, respect for authority, a natural social hierarchy — all these have suffered badly in recent years. In their place we are presented with images of Englishness which tend towards the aggressive: English football fans on the rampage, English holiday-makers misbehaving on foreign beaches — even English backbenchers baiting Scottish MPs in the House of Commons. There must be more to it than this. It may be that the English regions, such as the North East or the South West, will go their own way, but that still leaves great swathes of Middle England unaccounted for. And if nothing convincing emerges, then the European Union might, as Professor Black suggests, gradually erode what is left.

That, however, is to underestimate that most basic of English instincts — the ability to fight back when the going gets tough. "We English," said Baroness Thatcher once, "are the most underestimated people in the UK." It may be that the English will find something they have temporarily mislaid — those characteristics of tolerance, justice and a sense of fair play which were once the trademarks of their nation. Anthony Smith, author of *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, defined that identity as "a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity".

The Scots know instinctively what that means. The English may have to rediscover it.

Peter Brookes 19 iii 98



OEUF SUR LE VISAGE...

# No fire in Labour's belly

Brown's Budget had more to do with continuity and compromise than with the radical reforms the nation needs

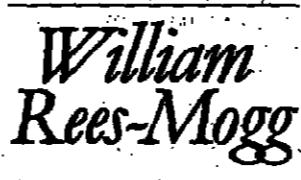
After two of Gordon Brown's Budgets one can begin to see which promises new Labour are keeping, and which are being evaded. In broad terms, new Labour is not keeping the promise to be radical. Gordon Brown's first two Budgets show a remarkable continuity with those of his Tory predecessor, Kenneth Clarke. One is always being told that Gordon Brown and his inner team have offended senior Treasury officials by consulting them too little. Yet both Budgets have been perfectly orthodox in Treasury terms, and would not have been all that different if, like so many of his predecessors, he had simply added a political garnish to the good old Treasury dish.

The danger is that unemployment will again start to rise because of the over-strong pound. If that happens, welfare costs will rise, and the revenue will cease to show its present strength. Exporters are already suffering a serious loss of orders; manufacturing industry, as in the early 1990s, is on the edge of recession while consumption is still booming. When the pound is overvalued it is bound to be difficult to sell abroad. One test of this Budget will be whether the Bank of England feels the need to raise interest rates again, which would result in a still higher pound. This overvaluation of the pound has been exaggerated by the relative weakness of the currencies which are going into the euro, and the absolute weakness of many of the Asian currencies.

After 1992, when Britain left the exchange-rate mechanism, the pound was weak and the European currencies were strong. Britain's economy then expanded, and unemployment fell; the European single currency countries suffered from low growth and rising unemployment. This process is now about to be reversed. Although it is still falling, unemployment must be a long-term political threat to the Government strong as it looks. There have been six Labour administrations, elected in 1924, 1929, 1945, 1964, 1974 and 1997. Each of the first five left office with unemployment higher than when it began. No Labour Government so far has lasted for more than six years. The three-mark-pound strongly suggests that unemployment will again

be higher at the end of this Parliament than it was at the beginning. Certainly Britain could not afford to join the single currency at anywhere near current exchange rates. Joining at three marks or above would condemn Britain to a decade of depression. If Gordon Brown is planning a pro-euro campaign for the next election, he has got on to the wrong foot. New Labour promises on expenditure were made cautiously, but the general election campaign did create an expectation that the National Health Service would be better funded, that hospital waiting lists would be cut, and that education would be a priority. When Tony Blair said that his priorities were "education, education, education", he knew that would be taken as a commitment of his priorities for expenditure.

Hospital waiting lists have lengthened. They are going to absorb the whole of the £500 million which has just been given to the health service; it is in any case a token sum, and the NHS has many other needs. If the Conservatives had still been in office, they would probably have found an extra £1 billion — and would still have been denounced by the Labour Party for starving the NHS of money. On health, Labour has not yet kept its specific promises on waiting lists, nor is it meeting the more general expectation of higher funding. Education is not much better. From a left-wing point of view, the outlook is bleak, despite the Budget benefits for poorer voters. Inadequate welfare reform, inadequate funding of health, inadequate funding of education, the prospect of a manufacturing recession and of rising unemployment, have all appeared in the first year of this Parliament; yet new Labour has the largest majority in the party's history and has inherited a strong economy and a falling deficit. On top of that, the European Union is



William Rees-Mogg

One cannot be sure why new Labour has so little radical fire. Gordon Brown would probably like to have presented a more redistributive Budget; Tony Blair would probably have liked to have made a serious attempt at welfare reform, on Frank Field's lines. New Labour seems to be a coalition inside itself, apart from its broader coalition with old Labour. Tony Blair cannot be radical in his terms because of Gordon Brown's veto, and vice versa. This cautious Budget, with its carefully crafted compromises, looks like a negotiated settlement between the Chancellor and the Prime Minister. That, too, is nothing new. Chancellors and Prime Ministers have often been at arm's length. But it is always bad for a Government.

New Labour has, by and large, kept its promises to its new constituency, the volatile and predominantly middle-class centre. It has not kept its promises to its basic constituency, those who depend on industrial jobs and on public services. It does not have any answer to the looming industrial recession caused by the overvalued pound. The Budget has made that prospect worse. Already opinion polls show that Labour is losing ground in Scotland, as one would expect from this pattern of promise-keeping and promise-breaking. In the next 18 months, the disillusion could spread to England.

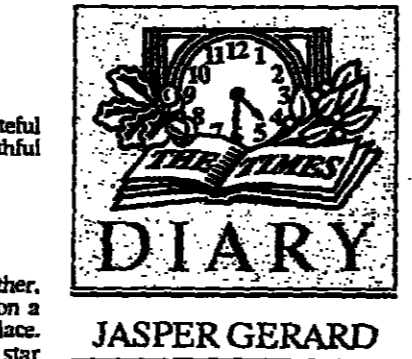
# Shirt alert

ROBIN COOK, that fashionable blade, has been trying out a stylish new line: the shirts held by the BBC "for times of national mourning". The Foreign Secretary, who popped into the *Newsnight* studios last week to debate European enlargement, suffered at the hands of a cash-handled technician, who split a steaming cup of coffee over him a couple of minutes before he was due to face Jeremy Paxman. Cook, who had already skulked off into a self-contained hospitality room (the distillates mixing with other guests) "was covered from head to foot" and "just about contained his rage" according to a senior programme source. "I am not going on air dressed like this," he told the cowering crew. Cue a dash to the special cupboard where "mourning suits" are kept — a row of sombre, identical black ties and shirts kept in case of a sudden royal demise. He selected a white shirt — the first time, thankfully, they have been called into action. Cook wisely eschewed the black ties on offer, but with the clock ticking he had to look to a Foreign Office flunky for a more colourful number. Alas, dandy was unimpressed. Instead, the choosy new

bachelor elected to wear a tasteful number belonging to his faithful secret service agent.

# Lotta bottle

EMMA THOMPSON, I gather, gave a spirited performance on a recent visit to Buckingham Palace. The *Sense and Sensibility* star seemed a good choice when Her Majesty required a "Cool Britannia" representative to live up to a lunch for civic worthies. Despite having sampled some organic nosh at various Highgrove func-



JASPER GERARD

tions, Thompson (pictured) found the prospect of meeting the head of The Firm daunting. A few drops of the hard stuff led to a few more. "I was so tipsy I didn't know what to do," she tells me. "I tried to curtsy and bow at the same time and nearly ended up flat on my face." This was received in silence by guests, including the Bishop of Dover and Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice. For an encore Thompson competed for attention with Her Majesty's perky pets. "The Queen shouted 'roll over', I didn't know whether to start rolling. Fortunately, she was talking to her four corgis who were doing tricks."

Kate Winslet is left without an escort. Her solution? Two minders.

# Booted out

THE odour of Paddy Ashdown is damaging business in an Oxfordshire pub. The Boot Inn invited Ashdown to send some footwear to join a collection which includes cast-offs from Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Stirling Moss. A pair of filthy mud-encrusted plimsolls arrived for the pub's dining-room with an apologetic note from the Lib Dem leader. "I hope they are not too ripe for your diners," it said. "As you can probably tell, they have served me well on many a run over Somerset's beautiful hills." Oh yes. After being placed between Fiennes's mountain boots and Yasmin Le Bon's stilettoes, the management is taking action. "Customers complain bitterly about the smell," says John Flint, publican. "They insist we move them. They are putting them off dinner."

OUR first transsexual councillor has been thrown off a Labour women's group. Rosalind Mitchell, an old Labour man living as a Blair babe, was rejected by sisters who refused to accept his claim to be a woman. I hope Walworth Road will order the committee to accept a composite motion.



FILM noir is to have a permanent stage in London with the opening of a *Ciné Lumière* next week. Doing the honours will be that standing artefact Catherine Deneuve, making a rare public appearance. The French Ambassador, Jean Guéhenne, will join 400 devotees paying court to Deneuve, who will introduce her new film, *Les Voleurs*. The Duchess of Gloucester is looking forward to meeting the nearest France can muster to royalty. I trust that talk about Deneuve's new role as voracious lesbian lecturer, apparently, is not too much for our dear duchess. The film kicks off a season of offies featuring Deneuve — seen here, left, in rehearsal with fellow stars Raquel Welch and Ursula Andress, right.

# Alan Coren



Things have come to a pretty pass, Mr President

I fear that I am, at long last, beginning to fear for President Clinton. I didn't fear before, because I had nothing to fear but fear itself, and I didn't fear it, even though others did: they feared that each new jolt and little of salaciousness, jotted in the press, titled on the box, would finally generate a fear in the American people that their President was unfit to preside. But I never feared that fear, and, though I do not wish to preen, the pollsters proved me right: for, as the toll of alleged peccadilloes rose, so did the President's ratings. It would seem that Americans don't care what Bill gets up to. They love him, because he's, I don't know, because he's just their Bill.

So when on Monday the latest allegation shimmered from the woodshed in the comely shape of Kathleen Willey, I thought no more about it. It wasn't until I put down the newspaper and looked out of the window that the more occurred to me: because I had suddenly spotted a small cloud on the horizon, no bigger than a man's hand. And the remarkable feature of this hand was that it wasn't doing anything: it wasn't insinuating itself around a woman's waist, it wasn't settling on a woman's knee, it wasn't stroking a woman's cheek, it wasn't even pressing an intercom button to say it didn't want to be interrupted for at least three minutes. Yes, spot on, you are there before me, that was the more — Mrs Willey had set me thinking not about all the many women Bill Clinton had possibly propositioned, but about all the far greater many he unquestionably hadn't. For it is these, I now fear, who will topple him.

I began by recalling that of all the allegations who had strutted their stuff over the past few years, none had been Black, Hispanic, Asian, Oriental, Native American, or Inuit. Nor could I bring to mind any who were sitting in wheelchairs, walking with guide-dogs, adjusting their hearing-aids, speaking in sign, or manifesting any other indication of being differently abled. President Clinton is not, in short, an equal opportunities philanderer; and my first fear, therefore, is that when this unsettling observation finally permeates his currently supportive flock, their support will rapidly ebb. Placard-wielding minorities of every conceivable disposition will besiege Pennsylvania Avenue, roaring their demands for positive unzipping, before marching on to the Supreme Court to file their exotic constitutional claims, and marching out again, bound for the television studios of Oprah Winfrey and Ricki Lake and Jerry Springer, to beat the breasts which the President ignored.

Fearful enough, but I further fear the airtight heard from all the lawyers of the conventionally-abled women he chose not to manhandle, even though they presented him with every reasonable opportunity. There are more than 400 of these in the White House alone, hapless dreamers who blew their savings on Versace and Chanel in order to be at their most toothsome when leaning over a photocopier, or reaching up to open a transm, or errand in an Oval Office doughnut, or — after lengthy research into the President's corridor schedule — gathering tactically dropped files from around his interrupted feet in a valiant effort at intelligence-maximisation. And, all this having proved to be of no avail, can you not envisage the consequences, as the rejected find themselves unable to hold up in public the heads they were not invited to hold down in private? How long can it be before the furious scorn'd dispatch themselves sobbing to some expensive shrink, who will prescribe immediate esteem-saving resignation, before passing them along to his brother, the expensive attorney, who will joyously file suit against the President for constructive dismissal, grievous mental harm, and sexual harassment, all fees to be met since you ask, from the proceeds of the subsequent bestselling autobiography, blockbuster movie, television series, ice cream extravaganza, and comprehensive range of personalised overwear negotiated by his son, the expensive agent?

Not long, is how long. Because the sad fact of presidential life is that you can fool with some of the women some of the time, and some of the women at the time, but you cannot fool with all the women all of the time.



## THE HANDOUT CULTURE

Like St Augustine, the EU has postponed the day of virtue

The enlargement of the European Union will increase its population by 28 per cent but add, on present estimates, only 4 per cent to its GDP. Although the main purpose of enlargement is political, there are huge potential economic gains for Europe, east and west, from the synergies created by this enlarged market. If the newcomers are to become Europe's future dynamo of growth, however, they will need substantial help to transform their economies. The question which politicians can no longer avoid is how to enlarge the EU without either bankrupting its budget or massively increasing the net amounts that taxpayers of richer states pay to Brussels.

The answer is that the existing members will have to lessen their dependence on subsidies from Brussels. This will require drastic rethinking of two policies, regional and "structural" aid and the common agricultural policy (CAP), which between them account for more than 80 per cent of all EU spending. Last year, when the European Commission laid down the principles of reform in its *Agenda 2000*, resistance was muted. But howls of "unfair" have greeted its publication yesterday of the figures that will translate principle into practice.

This was all too predictable. Regional aid, originally intended to benefit deprived communities, has now reached such absurd dimensions that more than half the EU's population receives these subsidies. The Commission's plan to cut the proportion of beneficiaries is a guaranteed vote-loser. The Commission has made a good start by reducing the qualifying categories in an attempt to target need more effectively. But rationalisation, like national attempts to reform welfare, almost inevitably creates new "poverty traps".

The Commission's CAP reforms are a further shift in the right direction, away from the lunacy of paying farmers guar-

anteed prices to produce food regardless of their ability to sell it and towards a system of directly supplementing the incomes of marginal farmers, benefiting the rural economies and protecting the countryside. Consumers will benefit because EU food prices will move closer to world market levels. But they are far from marking the watershed in farm policy that the Commission claims. This is a stop-gap package. Integrated rural development will still account for only 10 per cent of the CAP budget in 2006, and despite the modest and overdue cap on subsidies to the richest farmers — deplorably resisted by Britain, which has more of these than most — the system is still skewed towards the producers who can best afford to do without subsidy.

Britain's enthusiasm for reform will be much the more severely tested, however, in the changes to regional funds. Unemployment is being made the main criterion for determining subsidies for all but the very poorest regions. This country will thus lose heavily despite being both the fourth poorest in the EU and one of the biggest net contributors to its budget.

Since Britain receives £29.40 a head in regional subsidies against £28.70 for Ireland which is higher in the wealth league, this must grate with ministers. But in the haggling ahead, Tony Blair should restrain his team. He can hardly plead poverty while exhorting his EU colleagues to copy Britain's economic success.

He should push instead for the real cuts that Brussels has ducked. Between now and 2006, overall regional subsidies will stay constant in real terms although 22 per cent will gradually be shifted to applicant countries. The CAP's cost will actually rise, by 10 per cent a year. The best test of this package is whether it makes EU enlargement a more affordable proposition. That must be in doubt.

## ASSAULT ON EXCELLENCE

A devious decision that will damage Oxford and Cambridge

After months of delay and under the cover of Gordon Brown's Budget, David Blunkett has finally revealed his department's plans for the future financing of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The Secretary of State has declared that his "new more transparent arrangements" would both safeguard Oxbridge excellence and ensure a more equitable distribution of funding across the higher education sector. This statement is as devious and dishonest as the means by which it was announced. An entirely transparent system will now be replaced by a far more opaque formula. The ability of Oxford and Cambridge to maintain their standing as international educational institutions will be seriously eroded if these plans proceed in their present form.

Mr Blunkett has made two major proposals. The first is that the fee paid to the colleges of the two universities by local education authorities will be scrapped. The sum will be sent directly to the central university authorities by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Secondly, the total amount received by Oxford and Cambridge will decline over the next decade. This amounts to a reduction of between £10 and £15 million: the existing college fee is £35 million. All this is conditional, the Department for Education has claimed, on HEFCE creating "robust arrangements" — a vague notion — to entrench excellence.

The shift from the colleges to the centre means that the special expenditure involved in offering the tutorial system through colleges will now compete with the demands of university teaching and specialist research. Even if the overall budget were retained at 1998-99 levels this move would

represent a severe attack on college autonomy. Within a reduced budget it will ensure cuts. In Oxford, half of the colleges receive between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their revenue available for academic purposes from fee income. These institutions will have to restrict the tutorial system, increase charges for home students and take a higher proportion from overseas.

Mr Blunkett has committed himself to upholding Oxbridge excellence and exoriated the two universities for the allegedly high proportion of their students that have been recruited from independent schools. The measures he is supporting will force the two universities into decisions that would compromise their excellence and will reduce opportunities for those from the state school sector. The sole advantage of the "reformed" system would be a more uniform structure of higher education funding. This is mindless egalitarianism. It is utterly at odds with the emphasis on achievement and ambition that the Prime Minister has placed at the centre of his philosophy for education.

This damage would be avoided if Oxford and Cambridge could recoup lost resources through the introduction of means-tested top-up fees. Mr Blunkett and Baroness Blackstone, the Minister for Higher Education, seem determined to resist this option. They will argue that the idea is another example of Oxbridge exceptionalism. But Oxford and Cambridge are currently exceptional because of their concentration of excellence. A Government opposed to top-up fees is not seriously interested in preserving standards in higher education. Oxford and Cambridge must now consider whether they would not be better funded and better loved as completely private institutions.

## FOREST FEAR

Pray for rain and pass the ammunition for the Amazon

Every year, in the months of July and August, the burning season reaches its peak in Brazil. A suffocating pall of smoke hangs over the Amazon as cattle ranchers clear vast swathes of forest for pastures. Logging companies make more discreet, but no less destructive, inroads into the trees. They pave the way for the thousands of subsistence farmers who follow behind them to slash and burn, planting crops in a thin topsoil enriched by ash.

This year the environmental toll of the burning season will be heavier than ever, exacerbated by climatic changes linked to the El Niño ocean warming effect. The Amazon has suffered its worst droughts for more than 30 years. In the northern state of Roraima, an area which until now has not suffered deprivations as severely as other states (Pará or Rondônia, for example), the small fires of subsistence farmers have run wild. For more than two months, conflagrations have raged, leaving behind them a smouldering desert of ash. The larger fauna — peccaries and panthers, tapir and marmosets — flee deeper into forest to escape. Smaller animals perish in their millions in areas that are pushed more burn. A column of fire has pushed more than seven miles into the protected reservation of the Yanomami Indians, threatening the world's last surviving Stone Age tribe. A pitifully small ground team of Brazilian firefighters has appealed for reinforcements. But although the State Governor, Neudo

Campos, called a state of emergency almost two months ago, bureaucratic inaction still holds back promised funds. Brazil has no water-carrying planes or helicopters, and help promised by its national air force has, as yet, not materialised.

In the short term Brazil needs all the logistical assistance it can get from the international community. It needs the loan of water-carrying aircraft as well as manpower and equipment to help with the quick bulldozing of firebreaks. In the long term it is environmental policy that has to be addressed — and not just in Brazil where, only last month, powerful companies lobbied successfully to dilute an inconvenient environmental Bill which, had it been fully passed by Congress, would have resulted in severe prison sentences for illegal loggers. Britain, too, has a crucial role to play. This country imports more than 200,000 cubic metres of tropical hardwoods a year. At present an estimated 80 per cent of hardwoods are illegally extracted.

In Houston in 1990, G7 nations proposed to put more than \$1.25 billion into a pilot programme for the protection of the Amazon forests. This sum was subsequently reduced to \$280 million and only 60 per cent has yet been invested. Now Britain has its opportunity to move events on. In May it hosts a G8 summit in Birmingham. Climate change and deforestation should be high on the agenda. Meanwhile, all that states such as Roraima can do is pray for rain.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Prunington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Where 'Budget for the many' may fail more than a few

From the Managing Director of Fordham Research Services

Sir, Mr Brown's encouragement in his Budget of low-paid workers is laudable. However, his approach is at odds with current government investment in social housing.

Through the Housing Corporation public money is used to create new housing-association dwellings for just such low-paid people as are targeted by the Chancellor. The snag is that the rules encourage high rent levels, which are quite unaffordable by those in low-paid work.

My firm has carried out household surveys of some 20 per cent of the population of England and Wales. The rents charged for new housing-association housing are typically about £15 to £20 per week too expensive for those in low-paid work. The result is that low-paid workers are driven out of work and onto benefit in order to pay these high rents. Thus public money is being used to produce exactly the opposite of the result intended by the Chancellor.

Hence the result of public investment in new social housing is, under the present rules, social exclusion, not encouragement to work. It is to be hoped that the Government will soon sort out this major inconsistency.

Yours sincerely,  
RICHARD FORDHAM,  
Managing Director,  
Fordham Research Services,  
99 Talbot Road, W11 2AT,  
March 18.

From Mr Ali Szed

Sir, The "Iron Chancellor" has proved that he can be compassionate. The Government has staked its radical credentials in helping those most in need by increasing child benefit and giving a lot of help to the low-paid; and social-justice principles of Labour are enhanced.

Most of the prophets of gloom and doom were proved wrong yesterday when more money to the NHS, education and transport was announced. Truly this is the Budget for the many and not the few.

Yours sincerely,  
ALI SYED,  
38 Carnegie Drive,  
Barnsley, Glasgow G61 3HX,  
March 18.

From Mrs Hilary Bannister

Sir, The family with three children in your report, "A young family hoping to spring free of poverty trap" (March 18), think they need to bring home at least £400 to £500 a week before it is worthwhile to work and come off benefit. This seems to be a common

### Upsets abroad

From Mr Warren W. Williams

Sir, How much longer is it going to take Mr Blair to concede that Robin Cook, as Foreign Secretary, is a square peg in a round hole? His qualifications for the job are at best questionable and it is obvious that he lacks the sensitivities required for international diplomacy.

Thus far he has embarrassed the Queen in India, embarrassed the Prime Minister when Mr Blair was in Japan and now he seems to have upset the Israelis (report, March 18). Isn't there another, more appropriate job open for him, say on the Isle of Mull?

Sincerely yours,  
WARREN WILLIAMS,  
The Coach House,  
20 Western Lane,  
Mymms, Swansea SA3 4EY,  
March 18.

### Privatisation losses

From Mr John Fuller

Sir, Over the past weeks the National Audit Office has reported serious financial losses to the taxpayer regarding rail privatisation and water privatisation (reports, March 5 and 11, respectively). Local councillors responsible for such losses would be surcharged and disqualified from office. Is it not high time that government ministers were subject to the same rules?

Yours etc,  
JOHN FULLER,  
4 School Row, Haydon Wick,  
Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 3JQ,  
March 18.

### Cleaning up London

From Mr Alistair D. McConnachie

Sir, Something which would go a long way to tidying up the streets of London (report, March 14) would be if the private companies that now control what used to be our telecommunications system could hire people to remove the sex adverts plastered all over their telephone boxes.

Yours faithfully,  
ALISTAIR D. MCCONNACHIE,  
2 Tay Street,  
Edinburgh EH1 1EA,  
March 14.

Business letters, page 31

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

expectation with families on benefit.

We have three young children, a mortgage and run two cars and we survive on £288 a week. The stumbling block for families entitled to family credit is not losing it pound for pound over the specified limit; it is the loss of housing benefit and having to pay community charges, water rates, dental and prescription charges.

How many people will choose to work longer hours for no financial gain even though they pay no tax, but lose their housing benefits, etc? This is the reality of the Budget. It goes a long way to helping those people who want to work and not be dependent on benefits, but does it help those who have no incentive to work?

Yours faithfully,  
H. J. M. BANNISTER,  
173 Goldhorn Hill,  
Penn, Wolverhampton WV2 4QB,  
March 18.

From Miss Sue Heads

Sir, Following the Budget I will receive, from next April, a further £1.28 per week in national insurance reductions and £2.50 per week in child benefit. This will represent a very

### In the picture

From Mr P. A. Jay

Sir, Libby Purves, in her pitiless analysis of the abuse of a toddler's birthday party ("Anatomy of a picture", March 17; photograph, March 16), refers to the Chancellor's "girlfriend" as a participant in these shameful events, but does not mention that the lady in question is partner in a leading public relations consultants firm.

Are we to suppose that Ms Sarah Maskey was a helpless victim of some plot by government spin-doctors in cahoots with ruthless picture editors — or might we wonder whether she herself supported, or possibly even initiated, the whole outrage?

Yours sincerely,  
PETER JAY,  
176a Sutherland Avenue, W9 1HR,  
March 17.

From Mrs V. Hutchings

Sir, What man in his right mind would spend an afternoon with his girlfriend at his secretary's child's birthday party? Was he hoping his picture would appear on the front page of *The Times*?

Yours faithfully,  
VIVIEN HUTCHINGS,  
Babwell View, Cuckington,  
Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9PU,  
March 16.

### Obtaining funds for local projects

From Mr Antony Barrington Brown

Sir, At the opposite end of the grants spectrum to that discussed by Timothy Finn in your columns today is the case of our village hall, once the school, which like hundreds of others is being refurbished with the aid of a grant. For this we are of course exceedingly grateful. In addition, the villagers have raised the admirable sum of £50 per head, averaged over the whole population of less than two hundred.

However, I consider it most regrettable that the cost of the work has been double what it could have been if the grant rules were less prescriptive. Many more projects, particularly the small ones, could be funded if the red tape were cut.

Most communities have members professionally qualified in law, finance, insurance, design and construction. There are also many who have craft skills, and are eager to help. Unfortunately the rules forbid any self-participation whatever, or contributions in kind.

Had we been allowed to be our own main contractors, with a hired-in site manager letting out the main work by trades, and peripheral work on an ad hoc basis from volunteers, the costs would have been halved without diminishing the specifications or standards. Further to the usual attentions of the local building inspectorate, the finished work could be appraised by the grant body after completion.

Moreover, the villagers would have a greater feeling of pride in their communal effort, which is now confined to raising money. It would also be help-

### Ringing complaint

From Wing Commander Colin Pinnell, RAF (retd)

Sir, Like Mr Martin Hasseck (letter, March 9; see also letters, March 17), I am ex-directory. However, there is one huge pit which has my number — BT — and guess who phoned me one evening recently to ask if I wanted to join their "Friends & Family" facility?

Yours faithfully,  
COLIN PINNELL,  
32 Edna Street, Batzerra, SW11 3DP,  
March 17.

From Lady Bowman

Sir, While hopefully awaiting the legislation suggested by Mr Tom Stanier (letter, March 5) outlawing strangers trying to sell us things on the telephone, may I suggest that recipients of such calls do not hang up, but lay the receiver quietly down and go away. It can be some time before the callers realise that nobody is listening

### Sadness at loss of a royal library

From Mr George Sayn and others

Sir, We are deeply concerned at the current removal of the books collected by George III, and presented to the nation by his son George IV, from the magnificent room specifically designed by Sir Robert Smirke to house them at the British Museum.

The gift of this important royal library stimulated the Trustees of the British Museum to commission Sir Robert Smirke in 1823 to design a new museum complex, and the King's Library was the first wing to be completed, in 1829. Some 300 feet in length, the King's Library is a masterpiece of Neo-Classicism and one of the finest library rooms in the world.

We are greatly saddened that the British Library is currently dismantling this key part of our intellectual and architectural heritage, for transfer to its new building at St Pancras, with no proper public consultation taking place whatsoever. Surely a fundamental principle concerning the intelligent and efficient management of our heritage is to preserve historic buildings and their interior fittings intact, maintaining their original function and appearance wherever possible.

The British Museum will be left with a magnificent library room minus its authentic contents. We understand that, to compensate, the museum intends to borrow collections of books from elsewhere. Surely the British Museum, which will be managing another public library in the adjacent Round Reading Room, can also manage the King's Library as a splendid public facility, intact in its historic setting.

Yours etc,  
GEORGE SAYN,  
PATRICK CORMACK,  
NAPIER AND ETRICK,  
JOHN JULIUS NORWICH,  
POOLE,  
NICHOLAS SOAMES,  
HANNAH WOLFSON,  
STEINBERG,  
c/o St George's Passage,  
PO Box 2018,  
Westminster, W1A 1FF,  
March 18.

### Poundbury rejoiner

From Mr Leon Krier

Sir, Contrary to Mr Gavin Stamp's statement ("Prince who built a house of straw", Weekend, March 7) the Prince of Wales has not "failed to stop" the Poundbury development, near Dorchester, from "being compromised". Nor have I, Poundbury's "creator", retreated "to the South of France in disgust". On the contrary, I am supervising the project's execution and am very pleased by the results so far.

Poundbury is an extraordinary success. But beyond Poundbury there exists now a worldwide renewal of traditional architecture and urbanism. The magazine *Perspectives in Architecture* in my judgment illustrated precisely because it did not illustrate the Prince's ideas.

Yours truly,  
LEON KRIER,  
8 Rue des Chapeliers,  
83830 Clavières, France,  
March 18.

### Brains and beauty

From Mrs Sylvia Disley

Sir, William Rees-Mogg's article, "This is a dim way to choose a dad" (March 16), on Jodie Foster's choice of an anonymous donor with a PhD and an IQ of 160 for her child, puts me in mind of the old story of the actress who wrote to George Bernard Shaw suggesting that "with your brains and my beauty" they would have an exceptional child. To which he replied, on a card, with the memorable words: "But what if it had your brains and my beauty?"

We shall await the development of Foster Junior with interest.

Yours faithfully,  
SYLVIA DISLEY,  
Hampton House,  
Upper Sunbury Road,  
Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2DW,  
March 16.

### Rocket test

From Dr Alan M. Calverd

Sir, I was intrigued to read today (News in brief) that Steve Bennett intends to be the first amateur to send a rocket into space. You also report that he heads the space and technology laboratory at Salford University. An idiosyncratic use of "amateur", surely?

Yours faithfully,  
ALAN CALVERD,  
35 Badgers, Bishops Stortford,  
Hertfordshire CM23 4ET,  
March 16.

### Internet addiction

From Mr John O'Byrne

Sir, Can Internet addiction (report, March 16; letter, March 18) be cured by going on the *www.agon*?

Yours etc,  
JOHN O'BYRNE,  
2 Mount Argus Court,  
Harold's Cross, Dublin 6W,  
o Byrne@forbairt.ie  
March 18.





BITUARIES

SIR SAMUEL CURRAN

Samuel Curran, FRS, physicist, died on February 25 aged 85. He was born on May 23, 1912.

Sam Curran was one of a remarkable group of scientists whose inventions made an incalculable contribution to the progress of the war against German weapon technology. He was at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, with physicists including Dece, Bernard Lovell, Hodgkin and Joan ...

married in 1940) was quietly cutting up strips of tin foil and developing an idea which came to be known as "Operation Window". This was the scattering of clouds of this foil by British bombers, confusing German gunlaying radar and providing a measure of protection against flak for Bomber Command's night raids.



Sam Curran as Principal of the University of Strathclyde, Britain's first technical university

Samuel Crowe Curran was one of the last surviving physicists of the great Rutherford years at the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge. Educated at Wisbech High School and Glasgow University, where he took first class honours and a PhD, he went to Cambridge to research for a second PhD, but after only two years the Second World War broke out and his skills were required by the Royal Aircraft Establishment where he and a team of scientists were on a five-week secondment in the summer of 1939.

At Farnborough part of his job was to liaise with the electronics firms which were developing the scientific team's ideas. This period was exciting - but it had its hazards. On one occasion a colleague in the nose of a Beaufighter, to which a radar scanner was being fitted under

Curran's directions, accidentally set off the nightfighter's 20mm cannon and two shells went screaming past inches from Curran's head. On another, he escaped death when, on the very point of takeoff, he gave up his place in a Halifax bomber for a demonstration of H2S blind bombing radar to the head of research at EML who had not yet seen the equipment in action. The Halifax crashed

into the Welsh hills, killing all on board. Early in 1944 Curran was sent to the United States to work on the highly secret Manhattan Project - the development of the atomic bomb. During his period at the Radiation Laboratory, Berkeley, California, he invented the scintillation counter - a device for measuring radioactivity that is still in use in almost every scientific laboratory in

the world. But he got little credit and no money for his invention. It was all part of the war effort. Although at the end of the war Curran was offered a post at the University of California, he decided to return to Glasgow University to work with his former supervisor, Philip Dee who had been appointed to the Chair of Natural Philosophy there. Together they supervised the installation of a

300-megavolt synchrotron for nuclear physics research. During this period, Curran invented the pulse-amplifier, a modern proportional counter to examine the energy of many types of radiation. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and was recognised as a world leader in his field. Meanwhile the Department was rapidly gaining an international reputation. But Curran, realising that

there were no opportunities for advancement in Glasgow, began to feel the need to move again. In 1955 he was invited by Sir John Cockcroft to join Sir William (later Lord) Penny as a Deputy Chief Scientist at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston, to help develop Britain's hydrogen bomb. This was accomplished in 1957. Curran taking responsibility for a substantial part of the complex work.

After five years he felt that he had achieved what he set out to do, and when, in 1959, he was invited to take over the Royal College of Science in Glasgow and steer it to university status as the University of Strathclyde, he accepted. Thus, in 1964 he established the first new university in Scotland for 400 years and the first technical university in Britain. Remembering his wartime days, he set in train co-operation with industry at a time when it was not fashionable for universities to do so. He actively encouraged departments to appoint visiting professors from industry and with the help of Tony Benn (then Technology Minister) he built a "Centre for Industrial Innovation" (the first Science Park) where academics and industrialists could co-operate in research. And he encouraged members of staff to accept consultancies in industry.

Remembering his own frustrating experience at Glasgow University, and drawing on his American experience, he encouraged departments to appoint promising members of staff to personal professorships. All these things are

commonplace now; but they were not when Curran hit the university scene.

Curran was outward-looking and in 1966 he established a close academic link between Strathclyde and the Technical University of Lodz, Poland. At a time when Poland was part of the Soviet bloc and communication between the two countries was difficult, the Poles called these exchanges of students and staff their "window on the West".

Two things angered him: one was the very low salaries paid to scientists compared to those paid to businessmen. "Someday we will pay a terrible price"; the other was the lack of recognition of the part that science and technology had played in winning the Second World War; there were no scientists in the parades to mark the 50th anniversaries of VE and VJ days.

Curran's recreation, apart from supporting Motherwell FC, was golf and he was proud of the fact that he once had an article on *The Physics of the Golf Swing* published in *Business Scotland*. Well into his eighties he could still be found doing his twelve holes twice a week at Buchanan Castle Golf Club.

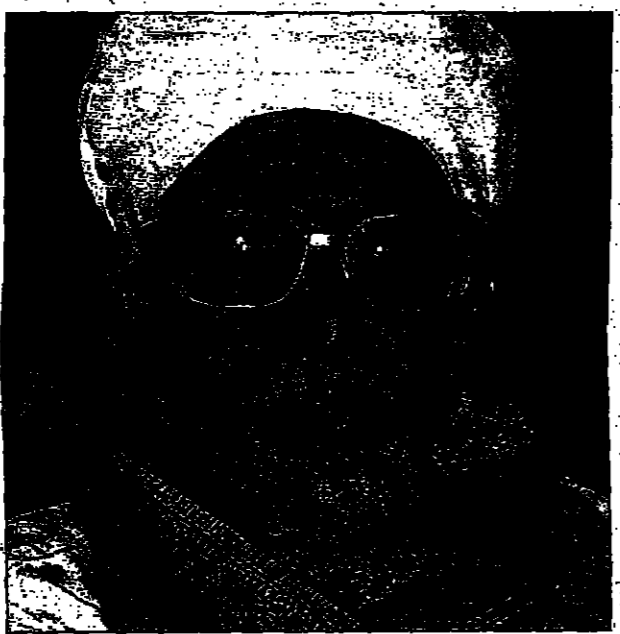
The Currans' first child, a daughter, was severely handicapped. This was a great sadness to them but they threw themselves into work for the disabled, forming a Scottish society. Enable, for parents of handicapped children and other concerned people, which now has more than eighty branches.

Sam Curran is survived by his wife Joan, their daughter and three sons.

SHEIKH ABDUL RAHMAN AL-IRYANI

Sheikh Abdul Rahman Iryani, President of North Yemen, 1967-74, died in Damascus on March 14 aged 87. He was born in Iryan on July 18, 1911.

(Judge) Sheikh Abdul Rahman al-Iryani was one of the early figures who led the early struggle for the republic of North Yemen. He survived. From the overthrow of the Imamate in 1962, through the civil war, to the establishment of the republic with Saudi Arabia in the summer of 1970, 22 republican presidents ruled in Sana'a, Iryani was at the heart of them. His main function was to tone down the most extreme urges of the Islamic and Marxist left to create a new state together. He was far from aocratic ideal he had the grip of tribal and rural communities reasserted itself, and corruption became



rampant. But the country was opened up to the outside world to bring in some new freedoms and, eventually, to pave the way for the union with South Yemen.

Almost incredibly, Iryani succeeded in making very few personal enemies in the process. After he was ousted in a military coup in 1974, he remained an honoured figure

in, and regular visitor to, his homeland. Iryani was born into a family of Shia hereditary Islamic judges in the village of Iryan, in the southern province of Ibb, and read Arabic literature and Sharia law. He then served in the judiciary as a qadi for a number of years before being arrested briefly in 1944 for his membership of a clandestine group of reformists, the Free Yemenis.

At that time, Yemen was virtually cut off from the world. The king imam, Yahya, was routinely accompanied by an executioner, and the national currency was the Austrian silver dollar of 1938, the Maria Theresa, which Napoleon had introduced into Egypt in 1798.

Under the next king, Ahmad, Iryani spent nearly 15 years in prison, first for his appointment as cabinet secretary in the short-lived palace coup of 1948, and then for participating in the revolutionary movement of 1955, when he escaped being beheaded at the last minute.

In September 1962 he was appointed minister of religious endowments by King Badr, but the new monarch lasted less than a week, and was overthrown by a radical conspirator, Abdullah Sallal, whom the king had made chief of the general staff.

Iryani nevertheless stayed in the government and became vice-president and Prime Minister. But he found himself being increasingly marginalised by his opposition to the heavy-handedness of some 40,000 Egyptian troops whom President Nasser had sent into the country. In 1966 he resigned from the cabinet and angered Egypt by calling for the withdrawal of its forces and chairing a peace conference with royalists at Khamir.

The defeat of Egypt in the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967 caused the withdrawal of that country's troops from Yemen later that year, at the same time as Britain's withdrawal from South Yemen, and the toppling of the Sallal regime in Sana'a when the republic appeared doomed.

Iryani was brought back as the head of a three-man presidential committee and proved instrumental in raising the royalist siege of Sana'a. He and General Hassan al-Amri, the army commander, became known as "the brain and the sword" of the republic.

The subsequent squabbling of the royalist tribes in the northern mountains and Iryani's leadership of the Sana'a regime eventually persuaded King Faisal of Saudi Arabia to cut off all aid to the former King Badr and to recognise the republic. This was despite Iryani's refusal to change the constitution of Yemen to call it an Islamic state.

President Iryani's rule came to an end in June 1974, when he was forced to resign and go into exile by a group of army officers. One of his nephews, Abdul Karim al-Iryani, became President in 1982, and one of his sons, Yahya, is currently Yemen's Ambassador in Prague.

SIR CHARLES HARDIE

Sir Charles Hardie, CBE, chartered accountant and company chairman, died on February 20 aged 87. He was born on March 10, 1910.

By profession a City accountant, Charles Hardie sat on the boards of nearly 40 companies - and politely declined invitations to grace almost as many more. Among those he chaired were Radio Rentals, Hallmark cards, the White Fish Authority and BOAC - which was to earn him his knighthood in 1970. Another was the British Printing Corporation (BPC), which was bought by Robert Maxwell after his time. He thereby became a Maxwell pensioner and was later a powerful ally for those seeking to recover their money after Maxwell's death.

Charles Forte and Isaac Wolfson were among the multi-millionaires who sought his counsel, and his friendship with Forte lasted more than five decades. It was Hardie who, over one weekend, thrashed out the terms of the Trust House Forte merger in 1970. He then stayed on the company's board, spending ten years as deputy chairman, until the takeover two years ago by Granada.

Yet for most of his career, Hardie's centre of gravity was at Dixon, Wilson, the comparatively small firm of accountants that he had joined as a young man.

Charles Edgar Mathewes Hardie was born into a comfortably middle-class family at Barrow, Hertfordshire, the son of a GP. He played five for Aldenham School, but left at the age of 16 to be articled to Edward Moore, the family firm on his mother's side. Qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1932, he departed two years later for what was then Dixon, Wilson, Tubbs and Gillett, with which there was also a family connection.

One of the jobs he undertook in those early years involved attempting to devise a secure system of Tote betting at greyhound tracks, but he also gained a lot of



experience in company receiverships and City flotations.

In the war he joined up as a private, but his administrative gifts were quickly recognised. Commissioned in the Royal Army Service Corps, he was snatched up by those planning for Sicily and D-Day - by which time he was a young colonel on Montgomery's staff. He crossed to France and spent the rest of the war helping to organise the stream of supplies for British units. He was rewarded for his services by his appointment as OBE (military), and in 1945 he was appointed to the US Legion of Merit.

Returning to Dixon, Wilson, he steadily enhanced his reputation and portfolio. Kayser Bondor, Crosse & Blackwell and the merchant bank Hill Samuel were among the firms queuing to offer him directorships. He sat on the boards of BEA and BOAC throughout the negotiations for their merger as British Airways. He also served for 19 years between 1953 and 1972 as deputy chairman of the Naafi. In 1963, he was raised to CBE.

Meanwhile he sat on the council of the Institute of Directors, producing a booklet on *The Role of the Executive Director*. He also wrote an

administrative history of 21 Army Group and similar accounts of the Fishmongers' Company (of which he was a liveryman) and of Dixon, Wilson - from which he retired in 1981 as a senior partner.

Hardie had an impressive air of quiet authority which made him a reassuring presence for those around him. A master of his profession, he saw at once what needed doing and always had total confidence in his own judgment. He never raised his voice or thumped the table, nor did he take refuge behind a forest of facts and figures. He spoke pleasantly and made matters sound very simple - but he left no doubt about how things were going to be.

Away from the boardroom, he sailed and played bridge, and he remained very fit to the end of his life.

He was married three times. His first wife, Dorothy, died in 1965, and the marriage to his second wife, Angela, was dissolved. He is survived by his third wife, Rosemary, whom he married in 1975, and the four children of his first marriage - three daughters and a son (Jeremy Hardie, the chairman of W. H. Smith).

PERSONAL COLUMN

Advertisement for 'reach' featuring 'Should we be celebrating?' and 'WE NEED YOUR EXPERIENCE'. Includes contact information for recruitment services.

Advertisement for 'SUBMARINE IN ARCTIC GALES' and 'ON THIS DAY' featuring a story about a submarine rescue in 1948. Includes details of the rescue mission and the submarine involved.

Vertical text on the right margin: 1, 3, ost, en, ted, no, yer, l, of, las, w-, the, es, of, ght, ich, the, t, is, en, the, illy, its, will, in, rry, of, ion, rd, e, a, led, up, no, om, m-, /ho, ase, on-, r, to, st, ive, PA.

NEWS

Brown fights to hold interest rates

Gordon Brown battled to head off pressure for a new rise in interest rates last night by trying to convince doubting markets that his squeeze on spending and borrowing in his "Budget for work" was enough to take the heat out of the economy.

Round-the-world voyage is over

The yachtswoman Tracy Edwards's attempt to sail non-stop around the world ended when her mast snapped 2,000 miles off Argentina. None of the 11 all-female crew of the Royal Sun Alliance was injured in the accident which happened after the 92ft catamaran was hit by a huge wave.

Cheaper food

Food bills should drop by £80 a year under European Commission plans to reform the Common Agricultural Policy. But farmers would receive more taxpayers' money.

Wing and a prayer

The Archbishop of Canterbury took the controls of a Harrier jumpjet over an RAF base. The pilot who handed over admitted he had "prayed quite hard" before their flight.

Diana butler's job

Paul Burrell, former butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, is to be fundraising manager of her memorial fund. He said: "I took care of her private life; now I can take care of her public life."

Hospital bugs

A clear link between the use of antibiotics in animal feed and the emergence of "superbugs" in hospitals has been established for the first time in studies by the Danish Veterinary Laboratory.

Newcastle apology

Two Newcastle United directors who allegedly ridiculed the fans, the players and the women of the North East during a drinking session at a Spanish holiday resort apologised.

Cook's last snub

Israel delivered a final snub to Robin Cook when no Israeli official was on hand to bid the Foreign Secretary farewell as he left for Syria on the next stage of his Middle East tour.

Police vindicated

A couple convicted of sexually abusing children lost their legal battle against police who released their identity to the local community.

Steroids trial

The trial began of six former East German sports officials charged with harming minors by giving them "vitamin cocktails" spiked with steroids.

Britain's lost aid

Britain stands to lose hundreds of millions of pounds a year in European Union regional aid under a radical spending reform.

Caucasus wifeners

The tiny Caucasian republic of Ingushetia has told President Yeltsin to stop officials investigating the traditional practice of kidnapping brides.

Academic comforts

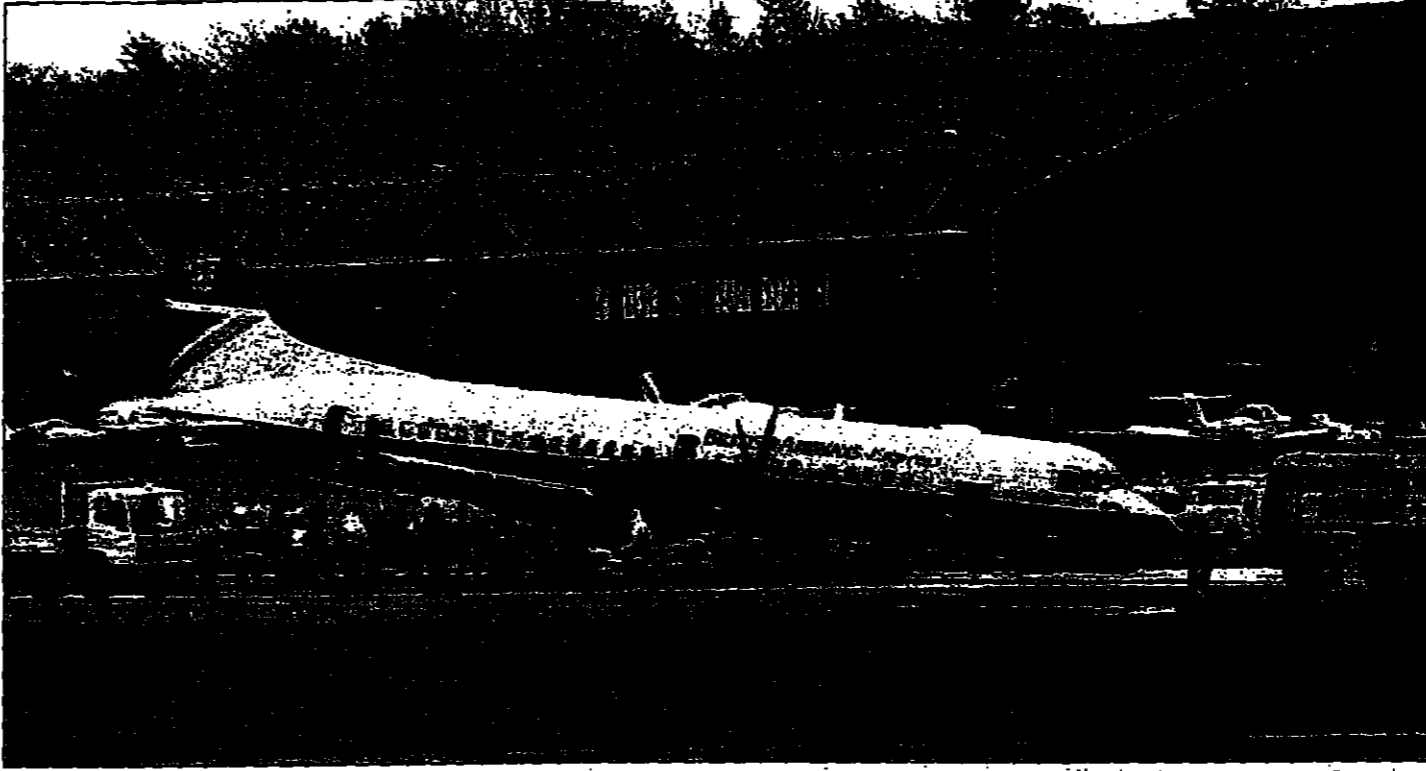
The comfortable lifestyle of students at elite universities is disclosed in a survey. Student loans are used for summer holidays, hi-fis, computers and cars.

India's bomb

India's new Hindu nationalist-led Government promised to press ahead with developing a nuclear bomb although that would risk international sanctions.

Brooklyn's murder-free week

Brooklyn, for long America's homicide capital, has recorded its first murder-free week since the war. New Yorkers attribute this to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's "zero tolerance" strategy.



Fifty-eight passengers were unhurt when the nosewheel of this British Airways ATP aircraft collapsed on landing at Manchester.

BUSINESS

Hanson: Robert Hanson received a payoff of nearly £500,000 when he left the building materials company that bears his father's name at the end of last year.

SPORT

Football: Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, is demanding more consistency from his team as they approach the second leg of their European Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final against the Spanish side Real Betis.

ARTS

Budget Tarantino: Fame has not spoiled the film director Quentin Tarantino - he still made his latest, Jackie Brown, on a shoestring, he says in an interview.

TECHNOLOGY

Back-up: "The conference attracted support from Tony Blair, William Hague and Paddy Ashdown, who are anxious that the British public should look after their bowels rather better."

MARKETS

Thomson: The tour operating subsidiary of Canada's Thomson Corporation confirmed a £1.3 billion May flotation and hinted at perks for retail investors.

CRICKET

Rugby Union: Dean Ryan, the Newcastle No 8, will play for England for the first time for six years in the Calcutta Cup match at Murrayfield on Sunday.

MOVIES

New movies: Jackie Brown is Tarantino's best to date, says Geoff Brown - a human comedy played out in authentic locations with a marvellous leading lady.

ENTERTAINMENT

Cool earnings: Jamaica's football team used to play for £35 a game. Now they face the mega-millionaires of World Cup soccer and, like the heroes of the hit film Cool Runnings, are in line for Hollywood fame and fortune.

FINANCIAL

Pensions: A government task force looking at pension provision is set to recommend that the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme be scrapped.

CRICKET

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 68.7 points to close at 5903.6. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 106.8 to 107.5 after a rise from \$1.6708 to \$1.6715 and from DM3.0308 to DM3.0522.

CRICKET

Cricket: Despite expectations, the pitch for the sixth Test match between West Indies and England looks excellent.

CRICKET

Lacking bite: Marianne Wiggins misses the serpent in Toni Morrison's Paradise; Bel Mooney admires Rachel Carson; Barry McGuigan cheers the champion; Peter Porter on the Great South Land.



Chariton Greene, aged nine, is already studying A-level mathematics.

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

EDUCATION: Aged nine, and educated at home, Chariton Greene travels the world - and is already studying A-level mathematics.

MEDIA

Will James Boyle's changes at Radio 4 work, asks Liz Forgan.

CRICKET

Best buys: Cycling and walking holidays in the Cotswolds; good deals on late-season skiing as fresh snow falls; New Zealand returns for less than £650.

CRICKET

Nearly four years after the beginning of the Rwandan genocide, the General Secretary of the United Nations has publicly recognised what some have been saying for a long time without being really heard. We knew what was going on. We did nothing.

Preview: Amanda Burton's forensic pathologist is back. Silent Witness (BBC1, 9.35pm). Review: Joe Joseph on challenging times for the Mothers' Union.

The handout culture

The best test of this package is whether it makes EU enlargement a more affordable proposition. That must be in doubt.

Assault on excellence

The ability of Oxford and Cambridge to maintain their standing as international educational institutions will be seriously eroded if these plans proceed in their present form.

Forest fear

In May Britain hosts a G8 summit in Birmingham. Climate change and deforestation should be high on the agenda.

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

The ideas of "the first 100 days" or "biting the ground running" are exaggerated, but there is a psychological truth behind them.

MAGNUS LINKATER

As England's Welsh neighbours flex political muscle by calling for a cabinet and ministerial responsibility in their new assembly, and the Scots consolidate the powers of their parliament-in-waiting, the English are left, somehow diminished, in between.

ALAN COREN

Mrs Willey had set me thinking not about all the many women Bill Clinton had possibly propositioned, but about all the far greater many he unquestionably hadn't.

CRICKET

Sir Samuel Curran, physicist; Sheikh Abdul Rahman al-Riyani, former president of North Yemen; Sir Charles Hardie, chartered accountant.

CRICKET

The Budget: royal library; funding local projects; Robin Cook; privatisation losses; cleaning London; rocket test.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,743

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-28.

- ACROSS: 1 Lively music from island company going round other islands (9). 6 It has little significance for a lawyer (5). 9 Our link with the French underground (7). 10 Chemical symbols for a salt written the wrong way (7). 11 Remove some characters from hotel, ideally (5). 12 Consumer group's discussions (5,4). 14 Girl calmly ignoring the odds (5). 15 Employed in office, one can do a lot, all the same (11). 17 Result of using loaf in addition - an arithmetical error? (6,5). 19 Shrub in alcove (5). 20 About time Meg rejected a rude word? (9). 22 Character from Italian city associated with love (5).

Hotspur Reports: CAMERAMEN LINER, MACLIN SCRIMSHAW, SINSANYWORDS, VIDELICET SALVE, ROOTS TOOTHLESS, DIPTICH TAPSTER.

London Road and Weather conditions. UK Weather: All regions 0226 444 910. UK Roads - All regions 0226 407 410.

Weather by Fax. Fax 0226 444 910. Fax 0226 407 410.

World City Weather. Fax 0226 444 910. Fax 0226 407 410.

Car reports by fax. Fax 0226 444 910. Fax 0226 407 410.

Hours of Darkness. Sun sets: 6:56 am. Moon rises: 9:08 am.

Newspapers Support Recycling. Recycled paper made up of 41% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

Helpful. If ever business or anything requires you to breathe Swissair, it's Swissair. To know that Crossair and Swissair between them offer 7 daily return flights London-Genève.

General: England and Wales will be fine again with cloud and good sunny spells, especially away from North Sea coasts. It will be warmest in southern England. Northern Scotland will be mostly cloudy with occasional rain. Southern Scotland and Northern Ireland should stay dry.

London, SE, E England, E Anglia: bright with spells of sunshine. Light NW wind. Max 13C (55F). Cent S, SW England, E & W Midlands, S & N Wales: sunny spells after any early fog. Light and variable breezes. Max 13C (55F).

Channel Isles: mild with sunny spells. Light NE wind. Max 13C (55F). NW, Cent N, NE England, Lakes, Isle of Man: some sunshine after any early mist, but cloud may increase by afternoon. Light to moderate NW wind. Max 11C (52F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW NE Scotland, Glasgow, Moray Firth: sunny spells. Moderate W wind. Max 12C (54F). Cent Highlands, Argyll, N W Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy with outbreaks of rain and drizzle. Fresh W to SW wind. Max 10C (50F).

24 hrs to 6 pm: b=brilliant; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=duch; f=fog; g=gale; h=halt; m=mist; s=sunny; sh=shower; st=st; t=t; w=w; w=wind; x=x; y=y; z=z.

Table with columns: City, Temp, Wind, etc. Includes cities like Aberdeen, Glasgow, London, etc.



Changes to the chart above from noon: high E will remain slow moving, the various low centres to the west and north will also have little progression.

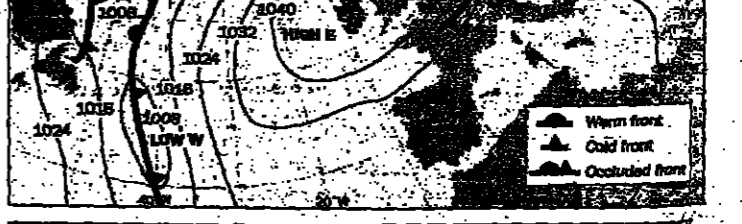


Table with columns: City, AM, HT, PM, HT. Includes cities like London, Manchester, etc.

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# THE TIMES 2

27

INSIDE SECTION  
**2**  
TODAY



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on the war  
against poverty  
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Late snow gives  
the ski  
season a lift  
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**SPORT**  
Ryan back from  
the wilderness  
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**TELEVISION  
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY MARCH 19 1998

## Tax experts cheer first Budget for poor since 1989

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE Chancellor yesterday received plaudits from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), the independent tax experts, for delivering the first Budget since Nigel Lawson in 1989 to redistribute money from rich to poor.

The IFS also praised Gordon Brown for his toughness on public spending, saying that, with an economic downturn on its way, it would have been imprudent to loosen the purse strings.

It also commended the Chancellor for the redesign of individual savings accounts (Isas), including the removal

of the controversial £50,000 lifetime limit on savings.

Andrew Dilnot, Director of the IFS, which was highly critical of the Government's original plans for Isas, said: "We should congratulate the Government on giving outsiders a say on its proposals and on its courage in being prepared to listen and change its mind. Isas have been radically altered and they are much better than the original proposals."

The IFS's calculations of the overall effect of the Budget showed that the poorest 50 per cent of the population had

SHARES in London Clubs International and Capital Corporation fell sharply in response to the Chancellor's increase in gaming duty from the changes as "iniquitous", while Capital said they would "undermine London's pre-eminent position in the casino market". Both have sought urgent meetings with the Treasury in an effort to have the changes reversed.

In the first year, Shares in LCI fell 35p to 232½p and those in Capital lost 15p to 14½p. Alan Goodenough, chief executive of LCI, described the changes as "iniquitous", while Capital said they would "undermine London's pre-eminent position in the casino market". Both have sought urgent meetings with the Treasury in an effort to have the changes reversed.

seen net gains, while the 50 per cent on higher incomes had all seen modest losses.

Splitting Budget winners and losers into different types of household, the IFS showed that all types of families with

children, from lone parents to households with two earners, had been Budget beneficiaries. Their gains were effectively paid for by people without children. Single people and couples without children, whether employed or unemployed, were left slightly worse off.

The IFS welcomed the details of the new working family tax credit (WFTC), expressing approval of the £1.5 billion invested in the scheme. It estimated that 60,000 lone parents would take up the credit as well as 200,000 single-earner couples and 160,000 two-earner couples.

Reforms to national insurance were praised for removing distortions in the system that acted as a disincentive to people entering paid employment at the bottom end of the labour market. The IFS welcomed the merger of the Inland Revenue and the Contributions Agency but repeated its long-held view that it would like to see total integration of income tax and National Insurance.

The one area where the Chancellor was given a scathing end-of-term report was capital gains tax (CGT). The IFS said that there was no evidence that the Chancellor's action to lower CGT on longer-term holdings would encourage investment. Mr Brown had failed to simplify the system or to make it fairer, the IFS added.

Mr Dilnot noted that, unlike Isas, changes to CGT had not been subject to consultation and that the reforms "merited the loudest trumpet call of scepticism."

Paula Seares, page 1  
Budget reaction, pages 12-13  
Commentary, page 29

### BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5962.6 (+88.7)
Yield	2.79%
FTSE All share	2728.59 (+27.13)
Nikkei	16818.68 (+377.52)
New York	
Dow Jones	8724.08 (+25.91)
S&P Composite	1080.34 (+0.11)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5.75% (5.75%)
10yr Bond	103.25 (103.25)
Yield	5.89% (5.89%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7.75% (7.75%)
Life long gilts	100% (107.7%)
6-mth Libor	100% (107.7%)

STERLING

New York	1.6702* (1.6753)
London	1.6718 (1.6685)
Frankfurt	1.6821 (1.6821)
Paris	10.2300 (10.1510)
Switzerland	2.4887 (2.4840)
Yen	217.67 (215.71)
S Index	107.5 (108.8)

US DOLLAR

London	1.0283* (1.0185)
Frankfurt	6.1288* (6.0955)
Paris	1.4907* (1.4793)
Yen	138.14* (138.77)
S Index	108.4 (108.8)

Tokyo close Yen 130.31

EURO

London close	€200.55 (€200.85)
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\* denotes midday trading price

## Greater state control of rail urged by MPs

BY CARL MORTSHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

A RADICAL reform of the privatised rail industry was proposed by MPs yesterday, threatening to trigger a major battle between Railtrack and the Government.

The all-party House of Commons Select Committee on Transport recommends that the Government endow the planned Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) with a far-reaching role in directing the future of the rail industry. This would include powers to disburse funds, finance capital projects and, ultimately, take a strategic stake in Railtrack.

Should the proposals be adopted, John Swift, the Rail Regulator, would see his job reduced to the role of umpire. Key functions, including monitoring industry investment and encouraging competition, would be taken over by the SRA. The Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRF) would disappear, its duties subsumed by the SRA. More controversial yet is the recommendation that the regulator have his independence reduced. In future, Mr Swift or any successor would be forced to take guidance from the Secretary of State, John Pres-

cott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

The committee report, *The proposed Strategic Rail Authority and Railway Regulation*, has been labelled by industry experts as "renationalisation by the back door".

The report envisages that the SRA be given the control of OPRF's funds for passenger subsidy but in addition, it would "hold additional capital investment funds in order to deliver its strategic objectives, including financing projects".

The committee also wants the SRA to consider going further and suggests that the British Railways Board be allowed to bid for rail franchises in competition with the privatised rail companies.

Railtrack would not comment yesterday but observers believe the company is concerned about any reduction of the independence of the regulator. The train operating companies (TOCs) said they welcomed a rationalisation of the regulatory function but were astonished that the regulator have his independence reduced. In future, Mr Swift or any successor would be forced to take guidance from the Secretary of State, John Pres-



## Kingfisher emerges as new mail order threat

BY FRASER NELSON

WOOLWORTHS is to land on Britain's doorsteps this year via a mail order venture by Kingfisher, the retail group, which yesterday emerged as the main victor of the crucial Christmas trading period.

A successful pilot scheme of a Woolworths home-shopping catalogue was among the innovations that helped Kingfisher companies, including Superdrug and B&Q, to lift market share over last year.

Group pre-tax profits rose by 34 per cent to £530 million in 1997 - some £40 million ahead of City expectations.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chief executive, said Woolworths catalogues will be rolled out

this Easter in an attempt to repeat the success. It will set up call centres, but contract the delivery to other companies.

The catalogues will be similar to those of Argos, whose home shopping outfit would be greatly expanded if it falls to Great Universal Stores' £1.6 billion hostile bid.

B&Q was the star performer, increasing underlying sales by 13 per cent.

Headline earnings grew to 57.4p (41.4p) a share in the year to January 31. The dividend rises to 23p (19p) with a final 16.5p.

Tempus, page 30

## Pension task force set to urge scrapping of Serps

BY RICHARD MILES

A GOVERNMENT task force looking at pension provisions is set to recommend that the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps) be scrapped because it is ineffective and few people understand it.

Tom Ross, head of the Government's Pensions Provision Group, yesterday told delegates at the annual National Association of Pension Funds investment conference that Serps had not worked and nor had its alternative personal pensions.

Mr Ross, a director of AEN Consulting, a benefits consultancy, said: "No one under-

stands Serps, and one has to question its effectiveness." However, he gave warning that, in replacing it, great care had to be taken not to undermine the guaranteed benefits element.

The Pensions Provision Group will publish its recommendations in a report in May. The Government is expected to use the recommendations to form its policy plans for the reform of pensions.

Addressing 600 pension fund managers and trustees in Eastbourne, Mr Ross, also asserted that there is no demographic time bomb for pen-

sions because state benefits were so mean. Instead, there was a funding gap, with growing inequality between pensions of the rich and the poor.

Mr Ross said that the State would be obliged to continue to play a role in provision of pensions, and that there were strong arguments for more funding and more compulsion.

It was also his personal opinion that state benefits would in future have to rise in line with earnings and not with prices. The limit on savings for people eligible for income support had been fixed at £8,000 since 1989, he said.

## Young Hanson given £500,000 payoff

BY CARL MORTSHED



ROBERT HANSON was handed a payoff of nearly £500,000 when he left the building materials company that bears his father's name at the end of last year.

The son of Lord Hanson received compensation of £462,000 in addition to his salary of £363,000 in the last 15-month financial period. Despite serving as a director for only five years, he was paid additional pension benefits worth £286,000 as a result of a company scheme aimed at boosting directors' pensions above the Inland

Revenue's earnings cap. Mr Hanson joined the company six years ago at the age of 32, having worked for the group's merchant banking advisers, N M Rothschild. He immediately faced a chorus of disapproving cries from City critics who feared the creation of a Hanson dynasty.

The younger Hanson, who often appears in tabloid gossip columns because of his previous association with "it girl" Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, is now running another firm sporting the Hanson brand - the family haulage business, Hanson Transport Group.

Another Hanson director, Jonathan

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Roy Harris  
Corporate Director

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### Cairn keen on strategic regional alliances

Cairn Energy, the oil exploration and production group, said it was prepared to make acquisitions where it helped its strategy in any given region and was also committed to the development of project country or regional strategic alliances.

The group said it was focusing on South Asia and Europe and that it was "excited" by new opportunities in the Middle East and Caspian and that it was hopeful of development there this year.

Production totalled 5.14 million barrels of oil equivalent during 1997, a daily average up 73 per cent on the previous year. The average achieved price of \$18.54 was broadly similar to 1996.

The group more than doubled net income from £3.25 million to £7.75 million in the past year on sales up from £36.5 million to £58.3 million. Earnings rose from 3.12p to 4.57p. The shares remained unchanged at 423 1/2p yesterday. Once again there is no final dividend.

Cairn remains confident about the outlook for 1998 despite lower oil prices and a more subdued industry background.

### Peel shares premium

Shares in Peel Hotels, the new vehicle for Robert Peel, the former Tiscali Hotels boss, are expected to race to a premium when trading on the Alternative Investment Market begins today. Peel, which is valued at £1.25 million at the 25p placing price, made its first acquisition last week, paying £3.85 million for the three-star Bull Hotel in Peterborough. Mr Peel holds 60 per cent of the company and has been granted 1 million share options at prices between 25p and 100p.

### Hands sells Emap options

Kevin Hands, who is soon to take over as chief executive of Emap, yesterday made £1.2 million from selling share options he exercised. Mr Hands actually took up 63,172 shares under option, half at 191.8p each and the rest at 219.6p, but only sold 13,575 of these, at a price of £11.15 each. These rest of the shares are either being transferred to his wife or retained.

# ICL demands more money for DSS benefits project

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ICL, the computer group, is reported to be demanding more money from the Department of Social Security to continue work on the £1.5 billion project to automate welfare benefits.

Harriet Harman, the Social Security Minister, is said to have expressed concern to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, that ICL's demands for extra cash were putting her department under "financial and contractual

pressure", according to a leaked memo obtained by Computer Weekly, the trade magazine.

Keith Todd, ICL chief executive, declined to comment on financial aspects of the contract that will provide automated benefits through the UK's 19,000 post offices. But he said all partners remained committed to its success.

He said: "This is supported by all involved. It is a big infrastructure to deal with but the system is attracting interest from overseas so it will be good for the Post Office as well

as ICL." Mr Todd said Australia's postal services had agreed to take the system.

The automation of the benefits system is one of the biggest computer projects and one of the key private finance initiatives launched by the Government.

Yesterday ICL, which has transformed itself from a hardware operation to a systems services business, announced a return to profit after two years of massive restructurings. It made pre-tax profits of £30 million for the year to December 31 against a loss of £2.5

million in 1996. At the height of its overhaul in 1995 the company recorded losses of £188 million after it had made charges of £151 million.

ICL's move into the black marks a key step in its plans to float on the stock market in the year 2000 with a value of up to £2 billion. It is also a big turning point for the business, which was one of the UK's great hopes for the technological revolution in the 1970s before its markets were eroded in the 1980s when the demand for mainframes fell. Fujitsu, the Japanese company which

owns 90 per cent of ICL, will now proceed with a flotation of the business after delaying previous plans for listing.

Mr Todd said: "After a painful period of restructuring we are now channelling our energies into looking outward." ICL's shift into systems services work was underlined by a number of contracts secured last year, including a £160 million contract with Transco, the gas pipeline network, to operate its telecommunication network and an £80 million contract with Marks & Spencer for a global retail system.

### Wassall to change investment strategy

By PAUL DURMAN

WASSALL will seek to escape the curse of the conglomerate by turning itself into a novel form of investment company, modelled on Candover and Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway.

Wassall intends to raise a pool of funds from institutional investors that will be managed alongside its own resources and existing businesses.

Chris Miller, chief executive, hopes this will give Wassall a better chance of buying the underperforming businesses that are currently being bought by private equity funds.

Wassall is responding to the disappointing performance of its share price. Mr Miller said the market has failed to give the company credit for the success of its investment in General Cable, which in three years produced a profit of £278 million, or 52 per cent a year.

Wassall has cash of £324 million, but is considering raising a fund of a similar amount. The salaries of Mr Miller and his colleagues will fall by almost half, but in return senior management will share 10 per cent of total realised profits on investments, provided they achieve minimum returns of 8.5 per cent a year.

The shares fell 39p to 328 1/2p yesterday because of heavy selling by one opponent to the plan, believed to be the Church Commissioners.

Last year's sale of General Cable dominated the 1997 annual results released yesterday, lifting pre-tax profits from £53.1 million to £33.7 million. Underlying profits fell 14 per cent to £56.5 million. A final dividend of 5.5p will lift the total payout to 7.8p a share.

Commentary, page 29



SHARES in Henlys Group, the bus and coach maker, enjoyed their sharpest one-day rise in two years after Robert Wood, above, chief executive, reported better than expected results.

Shares added 31 1/2p to 467 1/2p on news that profits — depressed by the reorganisation of its Northern Counties bus operation — were £31.1 million (£33.3 million) before tax and exceptional.

Analysts had feared they would be as low as £30 million. Mr Wood said the £60 million raised from selling its motor division last August would be used for bolt-on acquisitions.

Earnings slipped to 39.6p (42.3p) a share. A final dividend of 11p is due April 28, making a total 16.5p (15p).

### Laing acts to cut exposure in US

By ADAM JONES

JOHN LAING has taken the first step in cutting exposure to the US by putting its American housebuilding business into a joint venture prior to a flotation.

Laing's housebuilding margins in the US are less than half those in the UK. Sales were £103.4 million last year, with profits of £3.5 million before tax and interest.

The joint venture arrangement will pool the Laing assets with those of Watt Residential, another housebuilder. The joint venture should be ready for an initial public offering of shares in about two years, said James Armstrong, group finance director. He said the group could retain a 10-15 per cent stake after the flotation. The deal will mean that \$88

million (£53 million) will be returned to Laing by its US arm. An extra \$48 million of inter-group loans is also expected to be repaid.

Full-year results reported yesterday showed the John Laing group raised pre-tax profits from £24.5 million to £32.2 million in 1997. Housing profits rose 53 per cent on the back of the surge in the UK. Profits from the UK homes division rose from £11.8 million to £18.4 million. The average selling price was £117,000, up from £89,500.

Construction profits rose from £1.3 million to £4.9 million as sales increased from £97.4 million to £1.1 billion. A final dividend of 7p will be paid on July 3, making a total of 10.5p (9.5p).

### Income slumps at BNB Resources

By JON ASHWORTH

BNB RESOURCES, the recruitment and training group, promised a "new beginning" yesterday, as the damage at Norman Broadbent International (NBI), its headhunting arm, was laid bare.

Defections by key earners saw NBI's income collapse from £2.1 million in 1996 to £100,000 last year. Headhunters typically earn commission worth a third of the value of the package arranged for the executives they place — meaning the entire 1997 fee income could have represented one big assignment.

Internal problems were associated with David Norman, the former BNB chief executive and co-founder of NBI, who resigned last month. Lawyers are working on compensation terms. Richard Boggis-Rolle, who quit as BNB managing director in May, was paid £441,000 in compensation.

Graham Durgan, BNB chief executive, said five out of six businesses were "going well", and forecast that NBI would recover. He has largely completed a strategic review aimed at refocusing BNB.

BNB saw pre-tax profits slide 10 per cent to £5.7 million (£6.4 million) in the year to December 31. Group operating income was £56.8 million (£55.7 million). Fully diluted earnings per share slipped to 15.8p (19p). The final dividend stays at 5.2p for an unchanged 7.6p total. BNB shares rose 1/2p to 203 1/2p yesterday.

### Sale in US creates big rival to Reuters

DOW JONES, the US media group, has sold its Markets unit, formerly known as Telerate, to Bridge Information Systems for \$510 million (£307 million). The acquisition creates a major rival to Reuters, the UK business information market leader.

The enlarged Bridge group will have estimated annual revenue of more than \$1 billion and 169,000 terminals. It will overtake Bloomberg, the fast-growing challenger, and have a strong focus in America, where Reuters is trying to expand. Dow Jones made a costly miscalculation in 1990 when it bought Telerate for \$1.6 billion. Telerate failed to generate profits and its book value was written down more than \$900 million last year. The company said in October that it would consider options for Markets and a month later sharply curtailed spending to expand the service. Dow Jones lost \$800 million in 1997 as the write-down charges offset success in other businesses, such as The Wall Street Journal. The sale price means Dow Jones must write off another \$40 million.

### Pacificorp demand

PACIFICORP yesterday fired a further salvo at its rival bidder for The Energy Group, claiming again that the Texas Utilities £4.45 billion offer should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Pacificorp said that there should be regulatory concerns on three main counts. It highlighted the Texas plans to raise £1.7 billion in equity; its stranded costs in the US; and the industrial logic of the bid. Texas condemned the statement to the Stock Exchange as "desperate and unedifying".

### Kwik Save deal cleared

SOMERFIELD'S £1.4 billion merger with Kwik Save was yesterday cleared by Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, and will not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. It is estimated that the merged supermarket chain will operate more than 1,400 stores and will generate sales of more than £6 billion. It is calculated that the market share of the combined group will be about 7 per cent. Somerfield shareholders voted in favour of the merger earlier this week.

### Scholl ready to step out

SCHOLL, the footcare company, lifted pre-tax profits 13 per cent to £23.3 million in 1997, after a restructuring that began in 1996. Earnings rose 13.8 per cent to 18.2p a share. The total dividend rises 11.7 per cent to 8.6p, with a 5.3p final. Stuart Wallis, chairman, said the company was in a strong position to look at making a sizeable acquisition or a series of purchases, worth up to £100 million if the right opportunities presented themselves.

### Devro shares advance

SHARES in Devro rose 35p, to 465 1/2p, after the manufacturer of castings for the food industry reported a 12 per cent rise in 1997 pre-tax profits, to £58 million. The company said that it continued to benefit from its £38 million acquisition of Teepak, an American rival, in early 1996. Earnings per share rose by 21.6 per cent to 23.6p. The total dividend rises to 9.5p, from 8.5p, with a 6.4p final. Leon Allen announced his intention to stand down as chairman. Bruce Farmer will succeed him.

### Rosebys plans stores

ROSEBYS, the fabrics, furnishings and beds retailer, plans to roll out at least another 12 joint Rosebys/Bensons stores over the next year. The company reported pre-tax profits up 84 per cent to £13 million in the year ended December 31, on sales up 63 per cent to £184.7 million. Earnings rose 36 per cent to 24.1p and the total dividend rises from 7.8p to 11.8p, after an 8.7p final. Rosebys said that it may not be immune to the uncertainties that afflicted DFS and MFL.

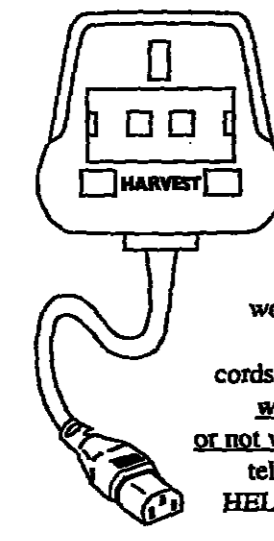
### Wilson Connolly payout

WILSON CONNOLLY, the housebuilder, is to pay a 3p special dividend from the proceeds of its withdrawal from commercial property. The company lifted 1997 pre-tax profits 44 per cent to £38 million. The special dividend is payable on April 17. There is a 4p final ordinary dividend, lifting the total to 5.5p a share from 4.8p. Earnings rose to 13.1p a share from 9p. The company said the average selling price of its new homes rose from £61,600 to £67,100 last year.

### Rea at the double

REA BROTHERS, the banking and financial services group, raised pre-tax profits by 95 per cent to £3.5 million in the year to December 31. Earnings rose from 2.50p to 4.92p out of which the dividend for the year rises 25 per cent to 1.25p after payment of a 0.65p final. Net interest income rose from £3.96 million to £5 million, customer deposits at the merchant banking division rose 19 per cent to £296 million, and the shares rose from 55p to 62 1/2p.

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### Surf the Net and watch TV

By JASON NISSE

THE prospect of television viewers being able to surf the Internet while watching their favourite programmes moved closer yesterday when WebTV Networks, which is owned by Bill Gates's Microsoft, launched a trial of its services in the UK.

WebTV — which has more than 300,000 subscribers in the US — is linking with BT for Internet services and Pace Micro Technology, which will make the set-top boxes, for the UK launch. The initial trial will last about four months and will only have a few hundred users at

first, while WebTV tests the technology. WebTV will increase the number of users as the trial goes on and hopes to launch a full commercial service by the end of this year. At present, WebTV has not struck any deals with broadcasters to carry the services. Judy Givens, of WebTV, said that it was in talks with all the terrestrial broadcasters, cable companies and BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times.

WebTV will be able to be used by anybody who has a TV and a telephone and lets customers have full Internet access and an e-mail address without

having to buy a personal computer. In the US, set-top boxes are on sale for as little as \$299 (£179). For this you get the box, a connector to the TV, a connector to the phone and a remote control.

The US services can run on a screen within a screen, so you can still watch TV while on the Internet. This allows TV-related pages to be called up during programmes — carrying background information or even video replays of sports action from earlier on in the event you are watching, so if you switch on to find Arsenal are one-nil up you can scroll back to see the goal.

Bank	Buy	Sell	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.61	2.43	Malta	0.688	0.877
Austria Sch	22.46	20.80	Netherlands Gld	2.828	3.252
Belgium Fr	66.10	61.14	New Zealand \$	3.03	2.88
Canada S	2.425	2.207	Norway Kr	13.28	12.26
Denmark Kr	0.162	0.161	Portugal Esc	204.67	202.6
France Fr	122.2	11.23	S Africa Rnd	8.01	8.05
Germany Dm	0.21	0.21	Spain Ptas	166.64	161.48
Greenland Dk	0.56	0.56	Sweden Kr	14.17	13.97
France Fr	10.8	9.87	Switzerland Fr	2.84	2.84
Germany Dm	3.21	2.97	Taiwan Ntd	402.88	381.1
India Rs	46.4	46.4	USA \$	1.777	1.777
Hong Kong \$	10.77	12.57	Notes for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates are as of close of trading yesterday.		
Indonesia Rp	1.57	1.18			
Italy Lit	1.37	1.37			
Japan Yen	1.37	1.37			
South Africa Rnd	8.01	8.01			
Spain Ptas	166.64	166.64			
Sweden Kr	14.17	14.17			
Switzerland Fr	2.84	2.84			
Taiwan Ntd	402.88	402.88			
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# Brown's Budget bluff

COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor



Always read the small print. Gordon Brown's admirably concise Budget speech could be but an overview of the Chancellor's plans; the details come in a mountain of official documents that not even an accountant with a photographic brain could have fully assimilated before bedtime yesterday.

But by now, some who had joined in the general relief over Mr Brown's apparent generosity of spirit are reconsidering their verdict as they pore over the letter of his intent.

There, in the guise of a statement from the Inland Revenue, readers will learn that he intends to clobber Britain's casino operators. We know that Mr Brown tends towards the puritan — a glass of whisky would not grace his despatch box, not even on Budget day. That tradition has gone the way of dressing up for special occasions. We might not expect to find the Chancellor sneaking out of the Treasury to join the Queen Mother and assorted City folk at Cheltenham this week. But if he does harbour any dislike of gambling, why single out casinos for attack?

Could it be that, in his youth, he found himself hured by the glamour of the roulette wheel and lost his shirt in one night at Monte Carlo? Somehow that scenario seems unlikely. Yet the

ferocity of the tax increase he is imposing on casinos has left the operators devoid of other explanations. Until now, the Government has appeared to be rather keen on gaming. It is enthusiastic about the National Lottery, if less so about its operators, and has no scruples about using Lottery cash to fund an ever widening spread of Government activity. In fact, Labour's Treasury appeared to have embraced the gambling idea so enthusiastically that the original proposals for the individual savings account contained the surreal suggestion that people should be encouraged to become prudent savers with the prospect of being entered for a prize draw. That bright idea was formally scrapped yesterday, a fact Mr Brown did not have time to mention as he was proclaiming the abandonment of the equally silly proposal that tax relief on Tescos and Peps would be capped at £50,000.

Compared with the Lottery, or pools, bingo and betting shops, casinos amount to tiny part of Britain's gaming industry, yet

Mr Brown intends to raid them for an extra £20 million in the next tax year and then £25 million. It is not the gamblers themselves who will be caught by this attack. The top London establishments dare not risk depriving the high rollers of their champagne or cutting the quality of their caviar for they would simply take their bad habits elsewhere. So shareholders will be the ones with the losing hand and some of those will be pension funds.

The swoop is not on the scale of Mr Brown's ACT smash and grab raid on pension funds in his last Budget. Only a handful of companies are affected and London Clubs, the hardest hit, is not an organisation likely to engender huge public sympathy for its plight. But after trying to persuade the Tories to loosen restrictions on gaming, the in-

dustry thought it was making progress with Labour. The warning is clear: despite his photo-call with three year olds, Mr Brown is not as warm and cuddly as the instant reception that greeted his Budget.

## The shocker in the small print

Over at the City's very own casino, the Alternative Investment Market, the Chancellor has made himself deeply unpopular. Shorts of such a kind can be heard from such firms as Winterhood Securities as they compare the grand words of Tuesday afternoon with the horror that lurked in the documentation.

The Budget speech emphasised the need to encourage young businesses and en-

trepreneurs. There was even the intriguing suggestion that the Inland Revenue would be ready and willing to help companies to set up payroll systems. But what the small print says is that capital gains tax reinvestment relief, which has been an important factor in persuading investors to back AIM stocks, is to be severely restricted. As far as the Stock Exchange can make out, the relief, which is currently available on investment in virtually half the AIM-quoted companies, is now to be restricted to newly issued shares.

The AIM enthusiasts — not a huge number, but people who have valiantly battled to preserve this intended answer to the eternal bleat that Britain suffers from an equity gap for smaller companies — believed that they had convinced Government of the vital importance of the relief.

buy companies on which Wassall will then be able to work its management magic.

The arrangement deserves to be given a chance. Miller learned his trade at Hanson and has proved a highly successful exponent of it since launching his own operation. Conglomerates are out of fashion but the ability to turn profits out of a collection of unglamorous businesses should not be undervalued.

If investors prove willing to back the new fund, Wassall shareholders will be able to play on a bigger pitch, with the risk being shared. They will have to trust, however, that Miller's expanded wallet does not encourage him to over-bid. His competitors are weighed down with cash at the moment and in danger of making mistakes.

## Holiday bonus

THE prospect of a holiday generates good humour and Thomson Travel may be on a winner with its plan to offer holidaymakers the chance to buy its shares. A mailing list of 3.7 million people should find plenty of takers, with plenty of attention being paid to the shareholder perks that will be on offer. Flotations are rare enough these days, but ones that offer discounts on floating in the sun are rare indeed.

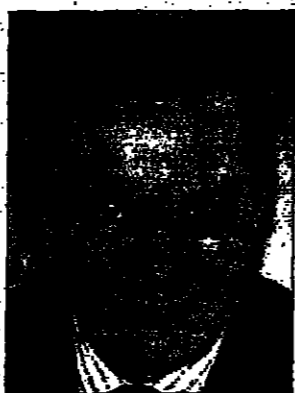
## Bowthorpe eyes Asia for growth

BOWTHORPE is ready to expand its Asian operations, taking advantage of a slump in the price of technology businesses because of the region's financial crisis (Martin Barrow writes). Nicholas Brookes, chief executive, said Asia accounted for about £40 million of sales each year. In the long term, the region should be comparable to Europe and North America, which had sales of £270 million and £215.47 million respectively last year. Yesterday Bowthorpe shares rose 33 1/2p to 44 1/2p after the company reported a rise in 1997 profits to £85.5 million (£72.86 million). The rise in underlying profits was 1 per cent. The total dividend is increased 10 per cent to 11.25p a share, with a final 7.5p payable from earnings of 26.23p a share (20.88p). *Times*, page 30

## Smiths on course with Sextant deal

By PAUL DURMAN

SMITHS INDUSTRIES, a big supplier of avionics equipment to Boeing, believes that it has made a significant breakthrough with Airbus, the rival aircraft builder, thanks to a new development agreement with Sextant Avionique of France. Smiths will work with Sextant, part of the state-owned Thomson-CSF, to adapt the flight management systems it makes for Boeing 737s for use on Airbus aircraft. Although the contract will not produce any revenue for two-and-a-half years, Sir Roger Hurn, the Smiths chairman, hopes it will lead to more significant orders in the future. Full details of the Sextant agreement will be released next month. Smiths was reporting an 11 per cent improvement in interim pre-tax profits to £89.3 million, from sales that were 12 per cent



Hurn: orders hope

production problems last year caused few difficulties. It is forecasting that the current aerospace boom will end with a "soft landing", with a pick-up in military business expected to make up for a tail-off in civil orders. Keith Butler-Wheelhouse, chief executive, said Smiths' industrial division produced the fastest growth, with profits up 20 per cent to £32 million and margins rising to 17 per cent. Mr Butler-Wheelhouse added that he was confident Smiths could sustain the rate of progress achieved in the first half. As announced on Tuesday, Sir Roger, who has run the group for 20 years, is to be succeeded as chairman by Keith Orrell-Jones, chief executive of Blue Circle, the cement group. Sir Roger leaves in November to become chairman of GEC. *Times*, page 30

## Weir beats forecasts with £60m

SHARES in Weir rose by 6 per cent to 304 1/2p yesterday as the engineering group's 1997 profits beat City forecasts (Adam Jones writes). Pre-tax profits for the year to December 26 were £60.1 million, up 22.6 per cent from £49 million in 1996. Analysts had expected profits of £58 million to £59 million. Turnover rose from £620 million to £636.8 million. Viscount Weir, chairman, said that it was not yet clear what effect recent weakness in oil and mineral prices would have on 1998 trading. He said that the performance of Weir's engineering products division had been boosted by a particularly strong performance from its pumps arm. The engineering services division was held back by losses in the computer systems unit. A 6.46p final dividend, due on June 12, makes a total of 9p, up from 8p.

## Redland Brick helps Istock to build up £23.5m

By KATHY LIPARI

STRONG growth in Istock's core British and American businesses helped the brickmaker to increase pre-tax profits from £8.3 million to £23.5 million in the year ended December 31. Turnover rose 20 per cent to £321 million, reflecting the first full year of revenue from Redland Brick, which the group acquired in 1996. Earnings per share improved to 4.09p from 1.85p. A final dividend of 1.45p makes a total of 2.2p, up 10 per cent. Operating profits from the UK businesses rose from £8.8 million to £20.1 million, while the US side rose 75 per cent to £9.2 million. Operations in Portugal, which are taking longer than hoped to offload, recorded slightly lower operating profits of £98,000. Istock also announced a ten-year agreement with

Parkhill Reclamation to create landfill opportunities for up to nine of the company's clay quarry sites in England, but would not reveal how much the contract was worth. Philip Mengel, chief executive, said Istock was not in the market to make any acquisitions at present and was focusing on organic growth in its core operations. About £13 million in capital expenditure has been earmarked for 1998. Operating margins, which were about 13 per cent, had further scope for "significant" improvement within Istock Building Products in the UK and Glen-Gery in the US, prompting some analysts to raise pre-tax forecasts for 1998. Merrill Lynch has raised its forecast from £27 million to £30 million. Istock shares closed 2 1/2p down at 61p.

## US defence pair plan disposals

LOCKHEED MARTIN and Northrop Grumman, the two US defence groups attempting to merge, have confirmed they will sell a significant part of their businesses to allay antitrust concerns (Oliver August writes from New York). Shares of GEC rose a 11p to 44 1/2p yesterday, a new five-year high, amid hopes that the UK engineering and defence concern will succeed in a bid for Northrop's defence electronics subsidiary. America's Justice Department objected to the \$12 billion (£7.2 billion) merger, asking for large-scale divestments. A Lockheed spokesman said: "Since first learning of the Government's concerns... we have made every effort to work with the Government to resolve the issues raised and the discussions continue."

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK Stock Market Writer of the Year

Shares push above 5,900 for another record high

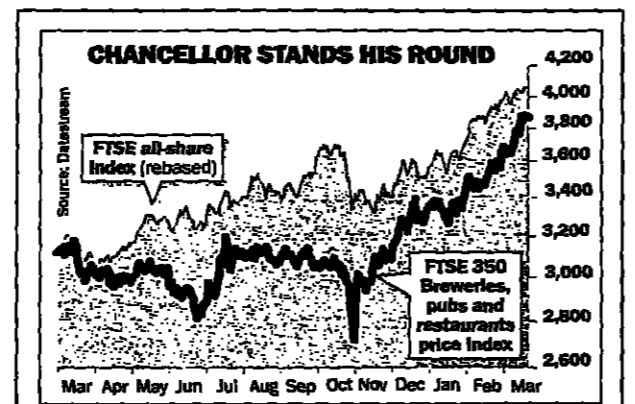
IF THE Chancellor was looking for a pat on the back for his efforts on Tuesday, he might have been fooled into thinking the stock market had provided it. Share prices breached 5,900 for the first time, to close at yet another record high.



Gordon Hodgson, chief executive of Arriva, saw the shares accelerate 24p to 464p as a result of the Budget

million subsidy granted to rural bus services. Arriva accelerated 24p to 464p as its market capitalisation topped £1 billion. Go-Ahead Group also put on 26p to 578p, First Group 2p to 323p, and Stagecoach 2p to 916p.

of ITE Group for £65 million. The deal will be financed by the placing of 123 million shares at 47p by Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker.



THE penny on a pint in the Budget was the worst-case scenario for the brewers, who have been begging the Chancellor to cut duty to help them to compete with the bootleggers.

There were some interested buyers sniffing around shares of Vaux Group, the pub retailer and Swallows hotel chain, as the price raced up 17p to 285p.

Oil shares lost further ground on the back of a weaker oil price. Enterprise shed 14p to 52p, Lasso 4p to 26p and Shell 5p to 416p.

Table with columns for COFFEE, ROBUSTA COFFEES, and MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION. Includes prices for various commodities.

Table with columns for LONDON METAL EXCHANGE and RUBBER. Includes prices for various metals and rubber.

Table with columns for FTSE 100, FTSE 250, and FTSE 1000. Includes opening, high, low, and close prices.

Table with columns for MONEY RATES. Includes interest rates for various currencies and terms.

Table with columns for FOREIGN EXCHANGE. Includes exchange rates for various currencies.

Table with columns for EUROPEAN MONEY. Includes interest rates for various European currencies.

Table with columns for GOLD AND SILVER. Includes prices for gold and silver.

Table with columns for LIFE OPTIONS. Includes various financial options and their prices.

Table with columns for MILE RATES. Includes interest rates for various financial instruments.

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Chirpy Kingfisher

KINGFISHER is walking away with all the bouquets from the Christmas trading period. While Dixons, Boots and Argos have been moaning about competitive markets and sales slowdowns, Comet, Superdrug and Woolworth have been quietly filling the tills and stealing market share.

Why should this be? One answer is that Kingfisher's rivals have dropped the ball over Christmas - a periodic illness from poorly targeted investment that seems to afflict all major retailers every few years.

chains achieved underlying growth of at least 6.5 per cent. B&Q managed an extra 20 per cent of sales on the same stock levels.

AS Sir Roger Horn prepares to make his exit from Smiths Industries, the question troubling the City is whether the company can sustain its excellent record. Keith Butler-Wheelhouse, chief executive, is confident but he will have to produce more than last year's £136 million purchase of Graseby if he is to convince the sceptics.

was not unexpected. Still, it was scarcely encouraging to hear Mr Butler-Wheelhouse point instead to sales growing at four times the increase in profits.

Smiths does not owe its £2.7 billion valuation to its size; with annual sales of £1.1 billion, it is, much smaller than many less valuable companies, and consequently vulnerable to a derailing.

THE stock market has been slow to warm to Nicholas Brookes, Bowthorpe's chief executive. It has not always been easy to follow the intent of the former Texas Instruments vice-president in the two years since he joined.

current year. Financially the company is strong, with negligible gearing, and future acquisitions are likely to be more substantial.

John Laing Shares in John Laing rose from 399p to 361p yesterday after perky 1997 results and the news that it is to put its lacklustre US housebuilding arm into a joint venture prior to a flotation.

Large table containing various market data, including company names, prices, and financial metrics. Includes sections for 'SIR ROGER'S SWANSONG' and 'BOWTHORPE'.

# First salvo in the long war on poverty

Before the election, a deep chasm opened between the message that new Labour sold to voters and the more worthwhile message Tony Blair dare not offer. To woo middle Britain, new Labour promised not to raise tax rates or to upset the apple cart. By doing so, it disillusioned many party stalwarts and incidentally tied itself in that straitjacket of compromise that bedevils coalition governments.

The campaign that the country really needed to fight was more in tune with old Labour's priorities. Taxes have been punched ever higher and pensions and public services squeezed ever more tightly by growth in welfare spending. Contrary to propaganda from welfare reformers, the tax burden of universal state pension and child benefit has been falling. But means-tested poverty relief has soared unacceptably.

The top economic priority was what old Labour always wanted: an all-out war on poverty. The phoney period after the election showed ministers sounding tough

on the poor unemployed, single parents and disabled. This week, Gordon Brown finally launched the first offensive of the real war.

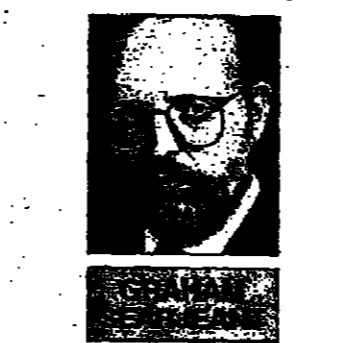
The reform of national insurance contributions and the switch from family credit to a better-structured credit paid through income tax should help more people to make work pay and gently boost the take-home pay of many poor families already in work. This was no blitzkrieg, however, merely an opening salvo.

Martin Taylor's heroic efforts at the helm of a Whitehall task force, which approved all the key measures, may explain a lot of frustrated shareholders in Barclays. His report also made clear that the Budget was not the radical affair the Chancellor heralded. Mr Taylor worked as near as possible within the existing system. He tried to achieve the maximum effect for the minimum disruptive

change. That is far better than radicalism, but confirms that this will be a long war, enduring setbacks, retreats and changes of tack before any sort of victory.

The first objective is to help, or to make, more people to take paid work. Lack of work is a key source of poverty among those of working age, but by no means the only one. Low pay, high taxes and low tax thresholds are fearsome foes. So are employers' national insurance contributions. The Chancellor chose merely to redistribute this jobs tax, whose impact must cut either employment or pay.

More insidious are social changes that force up living costs for millions of poor people. Breakdown of families, including the wider network and family businesses, imposes extra money costs. Housing prices have soared and utility cross-subsidies have been



Stung in the name of competition. Stable jobs within walking distance gave way to unreliable ones with hefty travel and food costs. Even leisure costs more in the consumer age than in the days of safe parks, pools and libraries.

taxpayers dear. Reform will have an impact too. The childcare element in working family tax credit is a welcome help to work. But also provides perverse incentives at huge potential tax cost.

The new "credit" is also not quite what it sounds. A true tax credit is an allowance against tax that gives earners a cash rebate if they do not have enough income to take up the full allowance. This one is a welfare benefit paid through the tax system. As Mr Taylor points out, the change would hardly have been worth the bother, especially for small employers, but for the large numbers of new low-paid supposedly to be delivered by the Welfare to Work programme.

The credit is not available to all, only to those on low incomes. Like a benefit, it tapers off, albeit at a more civilised 55p per pound of extra earnings. This is no triumph. Why should a marginal tax rate of

55 per cent encourage poor families but anything above 40 per cent be an economically disastrous disincentive to the affluent? Later in the campaign, high earners will surely have to accept a higher rate to buy more ammunition.

Deductions are even stiffer for those on housing and other benefits, the inevitable drawback of humane poverty relief. As a result, the poverty trap, though much shrunken, will still ensnare many. A two-child family with one earner, for instance, will gain virtually no spending power for a rise in income from £100 to £150 a week.

A policy aimed at creating many more low-paid jobs must also conflict with the planned minimum wage. So Mr Taylor hopes it will be low. Not too low please. The tax credit policy would be ruinously expensive without a minimum wage. And that minimum needs to be more than £3.50 an hour if a

family with one full-time earner is to escape the new poverty trap.

The tax "credit" will create more mess. Like the first stage of a spring clean. But it makes a vital start in bringing the tax and benefit systems together, the only route to common sense and truly fair means-testing. And it confirms a key principle for fairness and incentive. An integrated system must give more support to those in part-time work than to the non-employed and more to those in full-time than part-time employment.

In future years, Mr Blair's generals will need to raise the basic allowance against income tax much higher, in line with the minimum wage. They should convert the pseudo credit into a genuine universal tax credit, perhaps at the quite reasonable price of restricting all allowances to the main rate of income tax and taxing child benefit.

Much hard pounding is to come. Not least to snipe at the folly of the generals' tactics. But Mr Brown has declared a just war that all taxpayers should support.

# MPs line up the fat controller to steer British Rail Mark II

Investors must fear moves to derail the regulator, writes Carl Mortished



New colours: British Rail Mark II is a possibility under select-committee proposals

The stock market loved Gordon Brown's Budget and the sector that loved him the most was transport. Anyone with a share in the privatised rail industry was feeling a warm glow yesterday as the likes of Railtrack, NCC and Stagecoach gained between 3 and 4 per cent.

The jubilation is misguided. The Chancellor has set aside £500 million for transport, a sum that could be sunk into the London Underground system tomorrow and disappear without a trace. Spread half a billion pounds over rural Britain as well as urban areas and the investment is very thin indeed. Still, enthusiasts of the rail sector point to the strategic goal of shifting traffic on to the rail system. Such a level of political commitment must have an impact on the private sector, they say.

Yes, but what kind of impact? Yesterday, a document was published that gave a glimpse of what sections of the Government may be thinking about railways and the picture will both confuse and alarm the privatised rail industry and send investors running for cover. It is rationalisation — not in the vulgar share grabbing way of the 1960s but by bureaucracy and government edict.

The report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Transport comes up with heady conclusions: the office of the Rail Regulator is to be emasculated, stripped of its role in regulating the operation of the network and its staff cut. In future, the Rail Regulator will lose a great deal of independence and take instruction from the Secretary of State in other words from John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

Opraf, the franchising regulator, will be subsumed into the new Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). A picture is beginning to emerge of how many new Labour MPs see the SRA: their vision is taking on the guise of a regulatory behemoth. This is no think tank but a veritable government department that looks more like a British version of the Japanese MITI — famed for its steady grip on industry there — for the railways; a ministry

providing not guidance but instruction on operations, competition and investment.

The most immediate blow to the profits of the rail sector, if the select committee's views are adopted, will be the regulation of the rolling stock companies (RSCos). The leading arrangements will be subject to review by the Rail Regulator, the only instance where the select committee wants his powers to be increased rather

than cut. According to Chris Tarry of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the outlook for Stagecoach must be bleak, with almost half of its profits derived from Porterbrook, the train leasing company acquired last year.

But the RSCos have few political friends, not least among Stagecoach's train operating rivals, who complain that the rail leasing companies have too much power. The

long-term threat to the privatised rail industry is in the SRA. Its purpose, according to the report, is "strategic planning, coordinating and supervising the activities of the rail industry and for the disbursement of public funds".

And just look at the powers that the select committee would endow it with. The SRA will not just guide, but hire, fire and fund. The SRA will subsume the powers of Opraf, the regulator of rail franchising, and take over the responsibility of the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions on rail policy and freight grants. It will also subsume the Rail Regulator's function of monitoring operational performance.

But most extraordinary of all is the select committee's apparent desire to turn this new government department into something like an investment board for the rail industry. The report recommends that the SRA "hold additional capital investment funds in order to deliver its strategic objectives, including financing projects where wider public benefits cannot be captured commercially".

If new Labour loves business, it still wants to run things too. According to the select committee, one of the roles of the SRA should be to examine the question of re-letting franchises when they fall due in 2003 or if a franchisee should fail. Further competition on the network is a live issue currently being considered by the Rail Regulator. But the select committee has very different ideas, one of which seems to be the creation of British Rail Mark II. The report suggests that the SRA might appoint the British Railways Board (BRB) as operator of last resort. That, in itself might be uncontroversial but the select committee's real aim is rather different. The SRA is also to consider whether the BRB "should be invited to bid for franchises when they are re-let". And finally, "the SRA might consider recommending to government whether it could better obtain its strategic objective for the Railways by the Government taking an equity share in Railtrack".

Railtrack is keeping rather quiet, no doubt hoping that

## BUSINESS LETTERS

### Sent into a Far East flap by article's animal instincts

From Mr R. C. Buist  
Sir, As one who has enjoyed Anatole Kaletsky's articles over the years I must take issue with him over his piece of March 13. "Tigers prompt hawks to take flight like farmyard fowl".

Even allowing for journalistic hype, his Olympian dismissal of the actions of the central banking "chickens" was unfair.

It is possible, of course, that the Western economies will continue to surge ahead like the Energiser Bunny. However, the fact that some of the former hawks have altered their stance at the present time should give everyone cause for thought. Deflation is not something we have had to deal with for over 60 years, but it is not a benign force and can be hugely destructive of equity as well as debt. Central banks keep in close touch with each other and clearly are becoming more concerned.

The meltdown in the Far East is more reminiscent of the devaluations of the 1930s than the events of 1987. Enough has already happened to guarantee

### Forced annuity purchase leads to injustice

From Mr J.D. Woodthorpe  
Sir, Tony Christopher's excellent thinking on pensions (Analysis March 10) reinforces the urgent need to correct a significant injustice in existing money purchase schemes, namely the requirement to buy an annuity from an insurance company.

Not only are such schemes high cost, but the annuity yield is no better than a pensioner can get on a gilt himself, especially if it is guaranteed — and even then for only a few years.

As bad, any residual equity, which for the above reason can be considerable, is kept by

the insurer. Even the state, which has partially funded through tax relief the build-up of the pension fund, gets no benefit, either via IHT or from the tax-free insurance company fund.

An answer, for those who might still wish to purchase an annuity, is for a non-profit government agency to compete with a low-cost, high yielding alternative product.

Yours faithfully,  
J.D. WOODTHORPE,  
Atherfield,  
Park View Road,  
Woldingham,  
Surrey, CR3 7DJ.

# Caught short

HARD to imagine how City Index, the spread-betting bookmaker, can have failed to clean up on the length of the Chancellor's Budget speech. Sources had suggested the Chancellor would go on for an hour and a half, he sat down after barely an hour. So now we know how much Blair threw out at the last minute.

City Index collected £10,000 from wrong-footed punters but had to pay out most of these gains on forecasts of rises in excise duty on cigarettes, petrol and whisky. This was despite the efforts of one City addict who went "high

on a packet of 20 cigarettes, betting £500 a penny that the duty would rise more than 24p. It fell short, costing our man £2,000. A spokesman says: "We ended the day in front, but we only have Mr Brown's brevity to thank."

□ "THE City of London: Why it's the Centre of Global Finance", screams the front page of this week's Business Week, illustrated with a picture of a trader at Life bearing a slight resemblance to the cricketer Mark Ramprakash. He is clad in the mandatory bright jacket with security pass clearly displayed. The photograph on the pass is just as clearly one of the comedian Bruce Forsyth. I ring Life, who, I detect, are beginning to tire of my teasing. "We will investigate," my source says, deadpan.

WEIRD and wonderful are the various City livery companies. Although we long ago ceased making or using livers, the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers survives, and the next master but one embarks this weekend on a sponsored



pilgrimage to Rome as part of a campaign to raise funds.

Michael Davis, an independent financial advisor, is taking a scroll from the Dean of St Paul's which he will present to our ambassadors in Rome in St Peter's Square. He arrives in June and, like an earlier visitor to Rome, has opted for a trans-Alpine route as the most direct. The 1,250-mile walk is no joke for a 60-year-old, even if the pace is not too tough. "I've left myself enough slack, if I meet someone, it rains all day or I get really bad blisters, to take the day off."

□ ROGER JONES is retiring from Woolworths — for the second time. Because he has been there 44 years and is only

60, I inquire if his first job required him to go up chimneys. "In those days you could join the management training scheme at 16," he says. Jones, who ran Woolworths before transferring to Superdrug in 1992, tried to retire three years later but was hauled back from the brink to run Woolworths again after the company ran into a sticky patch. This time it's for keeps, he says.

"It's a perverse sort of world," he muses. "Lots of people would love to have executive and non-executive jobs pushed their way. I've had a lot of super offers, but I've promised my wife we will finally see those cities in Europe where I've only seen the inside of conference centres or shopping malls."

MARTIN WALLER

Cherie aid

THE Kent brewer Shepherd Neame has lined up some well-connected legal talent in its doomed fight to have the duty on beer thrown out by the European Court as unconstitutional. The case has failed so far, and an oral application for an appeal will be heard at the High Court on Monday. The counsel is Cherie Booth. This is not the first time the wife of the Prime Minister has acted for parties challenging government policy, of course. But her last-minute appointment seems suspiciously fortuitous. Stuart Neame, vice-chair-



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Shares close at best of day

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Main table of equity prices with columns for company name, price, change, and various ratios. Includes sub-sections for ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, Pubs & REST, DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT, ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, RETAILERS GENERAL, OTHER FINANCIAL, MEDIA, PHARMACEUTICALS, SUPPORT SERVICES, PRINTING & PAPER, MINING, PROPERTY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, OIL & GAS, LEISURE & HOTELS, INSURANCE, RETAILERS FOOD, and ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET.

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SHORTS (under 5 years), LONGS (over 15 years), UNDATED, and MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years) table with columns for company name, price, and yield.

INDEX-LINKED table with columns for company name, price, and yield.

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# ACCOUNTANCY

## Traditional practice under threat

Philip Ashton says auditors must change to avoid becoming irrelevant

Across the accountancy profession and on the boards of leading companies there is a growing band of visionaries who believe that the traditional audit is becoming increasingly irrelevant to companies and their investors, and that a fundamental change in the way that audits are conducted is inevitable.

This shift in opinion is the result of many factors, including new corporate structures and governance practices, increasing sophistication on the part of investors, continuing globalisation, growing competition and advancing technology. Together these amount to a powerful force for fundamental change in the way that the accountancy profession recruits and trains its people and carries out its job.

The traditional audit — though useful — will in the future simply not be enough to tell management and stakeholders how the company is doing. That is because the audit as we know it is historical, in an age when companies and their managements live in the future and plan well into the future.

In an environment where vast sums are transferred electronically and leading businesses can collapse in three days this procedure is increasingly irrelevant. By the time it comes out, management, which is

awash with online, up-to-the-minute data on the business, has already moved on to new concerns. Investors have seen the press releases, read the company announcements and probably traded already on the basis of events long after the end-of-year cut-off date.

But a second problem is potentially more damaging to the audit's standing: management increasingly thinks of its business not in terms of financial statements, but processes. It controls and monitors its business along process lines of responsibility. The audit, with its concentration on the statutory profit-and-loss account, will decline further in its perceived value if it ignores this.

This growing separation between audit practice and what clients want means that the profession risks becoming divorced from those it serves. In the past a senior chartered accountant could move easily to be a finance director or other director in a public company. In recent years management has moved so far from the accountant's traditional view of the world that such a switch is no longer easy.

The search for solutions to these interrelated problems is the subject of much thought among strategists in leading accountancy practices and has evinced a surprising degree of



Philip Ashton expects a sea change in the role of auditors

agreement. Instead of focusing on financial statements, the audit needs to be reorientated around the processes that constitute the client's own view of the business. By doing this the audit takes on many of the characteristics of the risk-management function, helping to spot problems by building a picture of whether management is really in control of its

processes, and evaluating the credibility, skill and competence of the individuals who "own" each process.

Such a change requires a quantum leap in the role of the auditor. In the era of advanced computerisation, checking each transaction is largely unnecessary. The auditor needs to ask the owner of each process hard, focused, direct and well-in-

formed questions about what the person actually does, what they perceive as the problems in their process, what they are doing about them and what information they base their decisions on. This process-oriented approach would have great benefits for auditing banks and financial institutions, especially with operations such as foreign exchange and derivatives. As a methodology it is transferrable and could be applied equally well to a large manufacturing company one day, a utility the next and an office cleaning business the day after.

Whatever the impact on the profession, it is companies and investors who will be the real winners. By eliciting up-to-date information on processes, auditors will be able to give top management an even greater service: to improve their business, evaluate management performance and address problems before they get out of hand. More frequent health checks will offer even greater comfort to investors.

Philip Ashton is a tax partner at Price Waterhouse.

## International issue paints surreal picture

IT IS ALL as Magritte, the great Surrealist painter, would have pointed out, a matter of appearances. At a centenary exhibition of his work which has just opened in Brussels you can see a huge number of paintings of people in bowler hats. Meanwhile, on the other side of the city centre last week, a conference of accountants was discussing issues that showed just how far the old stereotypes have changed.

It is all down to the generation which has been fueling stock prices around the world as a result of its worries over future pensions. The conference, planned by the English ICA, was debating the current state of international accounting standards. But, as James Cochrane of the New York Stock Exchange was showing, the pressure for international harmonisation of financial reporting is largely a result of the baby boomer generation's obsession with voraciously hoovering up equities on the world's stock markets.

American savings have moved from \$16.5 trillion in 1991 to \$26.9 trillion in 1997, with 22 per cent of that held in equities of which 48 per cent are held by ordinary households. The pressure is mounting to harmonise methods of financial reporting so that investment can become ever more transparent and cross-border. Pat McConnell of Bear Stearns said: "The driver is the globalisation of investment business."

Even the Europeans, once suspicious of such phenomena, agree. Karel Van Hulle, head of financial information and accounting standards at the European Commission, argued that there would be a rapid integration of European capital markets after the introduction of the euro. And that would mean that improving the quality of financial statements, auditing, rules and enforcement throughout Europe would become urgent.

It is quite something when you find a senior official from the European Commission arguing that "the changes will be market-driven and there can be no doubt about this". But the understanding that cross-border listings is both the answer and inevitable is a powerful motivation. The result is solid backing for the International Accounting Standards Committee's efforts to produce a set of financial reporting rules which will gain the imprimatur of IOSCO, the securities exchanges' organisation.

Sir Bryan Carsberg, secretary-general of the IASC, capitalised on this, emphasising

how accounting and financial reporting shortcomings in Asia had added to recent crises. More transparent accounting would most certainly be a help.

But there are two problems. The first is in Europe, the second in America. In Europe we are still labouring under the various directives laid down by the European Commission. As Sir David Tweedie, of the UK Accounting Standard Board, put it: "They are now 20 years old, they reflect the thinking of the 1970s, they are getting in the way."

His views were reinforced by David Darbyshire, president of FEE, the European accounting body that argued that having rules which simply reflected tortuous negotiations of some 20 years earlier was disastrous. Quite simply the market would punish Europe. With luck, the recognition of this at the European Commission may help to sort this out.

But the second problem is an American one and is intractable. The timetable for gaining acceptance of international financial reporting

rules which would enable European companies, for example, to gain listings in America suggests that IASC will finish its programme by the end of this year. IOSCO will grant its acceptance in June next year. And then?

The last player is the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in America. Its senior associate chief accountant, Mary Tokar, spoke in Brussels. But at a conference where greater transparency and openness were the themes, she refused to be drawn on the SEC's thinking.

There are two conclusions you can draw. Carsberg simply smiled and reminded me that, when he headed Ofsted, the telecoms regulator, he was constantly trained by civil servants not to say anything which would "fetter your discretion". Tokar kept saying that the SEC's lawyers had told her not to answer this question or that question.

Or it could be that the SEC, which has always been a bit of a bully on the financial reporting circuit, wants to retain that role. There has always been a suspicion that, even if the IASC rules were accepted, the SEC would want to retain its power to tell companies that tougher rules protected by SEC secrecy would bar them from a US listing. Oddly the Americans seem to be trying to outgun market forces, while the Europeans are reconciled with going with the flow. Magritte would have enjoyed it.



ROBERT BRUCE

"There have been a number of incidents of people trying to obtain information about a company's functions by purporting to be customs officers," it says. But despite descriptions of the individuals and action by the police none of the individuals has been caught. We suggest you should not take the law into your own hands. Chucking the VAT inspector off your premises and claiming that he is an impostor is not believed to be likely to do much for any subsequent appeal over late payments.

ROBERT BRUCE

## KPMG considers marital relations

THEY should have an interesting time down at KPMG on April 18. A dazzling affair is planned beneath the atrium at their headquarters in London. The gathering that night will be the first-ever tax alumni cocktail party. And it may prove more interesting than they expected. For a start they are having a tough time keeping track of quite who is, and who isn't, an alumnus. Take Simon Rees, for example. These days he is one of the

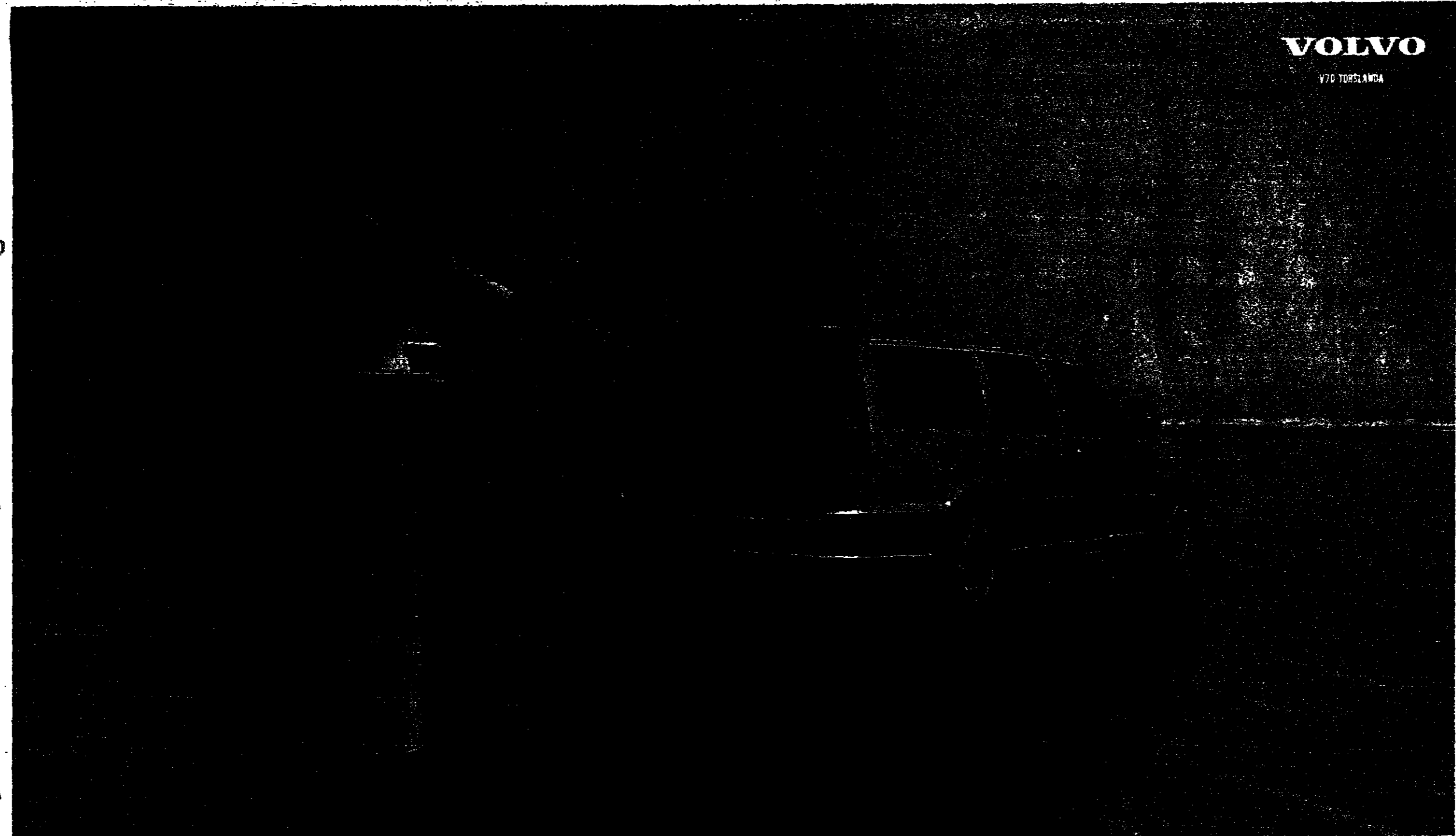
founding partners of Rees Pollock, the precocious City practice, which recently celebrated its 8th birthday in some style. And KPMG has invited him along. Trouble is that he's never worked for KPMG. He sprang, as did much of Rees Pollock, from Ernst & Young. Perhaps the party was planned before the merger between Ernst & Young and KPMG was called off. At least that way Rees could have been an alumnus by marriage.

MEANWHILE, everything is looking pretty smart at the London Bridge headquarters of Price Waterhouse. The old head office entrance, which used to resemble a factory delivery bay, has been transformed. But a bit of money has obviously been saved on the sign on the front. As they await a decision over what name might be appended to the merger between themselves and Coopers & Lybrand, they have decided not to go for the full brass plate

just yet. In fact the PW sign they have put up looks distinctly like a stick-on plastic logo. Probably just in case the Coopers partners do have the effrontery to insist that they should have some say in the name of the new firm.

## VAT's odd

THERE are a lot of sad people about. Customs and Excise has issued a warning on the impersonation of customs officers.



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Main table containing unit trust prices, organized in columns with headers for fund names, share prices, and other financial metrics.

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Advertisement for Roche-Bois featuring a large '8' and the text 'LAST FEW DAYS Sale ends Saturday 21st March at 7pm. How will you resist Roche-Bois prices?'.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or additional page information.



Giles Tremlett introduces a two-page report on the Basque Country, which has an importance to Spain greater than its size suggests

# Dour, different and decidedly independent

With its green hills, rainy weather and smoke-stack factories, the Basque Country has little in common with the popular, if outdated, image of Spain as a place of sun, fan and siestas. The Basques do not mind this. They like being different. They are proud of their reputation for hard work and the serious, sometimes dour, mentality that sets them apart from their southern cousins.

In geographical terms the Basque Country — stretching along the Atlantic coast from the French border to just west of Bilbao — is a tiny part of Spain. The three provinces that make up the semi-autonomous Basque region occupy 1.5 per cent of Spanish territory. But the Basque Country has an economic and political importance in Spain that far outweighs its size. This is one of the country's most densely populated regions, with 2.2 million inhabitants, as well as being one of its most important industrial centres, accounting for 6 per cent of gross domestic product.

At the turn of this century the Basque Country, and especially the area around Bilbao, became Spain's industrial powerhouse, producing everything from iron ore and steel to petrol tankers and trains. Although much of its heavy industry fell into decline in the 1970s and 1980s, it remains determinedly industrial.

The Basque Country is acutely aware of its special characteristics. Part of the Basque population, those who belong to the unusually numerous rhesus negative blood group, can even lay claim to a genetically separate human inheritance. The Basque Country has its own language, Euskara, which bears no relation to the other languages of Spain or southern Europe. It is also Spain's most intensely religious region.

The powerful Roman Catholic Jesuit order was founded here by the Basque saint, Ignatius of Loyola, in the 16th century. The influence of Jesuit teachers means this has also always been one of Spain's best-educated regions. Among the region's most celebrated cultural peculiarities are a fascination with food and a love of endurance sports. This is a place where talented chefs, oarsmen and stone-lifters achieve celebrity status.

Local loyalties are so strong that the region's two first-division soccer clubs, Athletic Bilbao and San Sebastian's Real Sociedad, both refuse to field players from other parts of Spain. All these special things, together with a long and much-debated history as a people with special rights within Spain, give rise to what some Basque politicians call the *hechos diferenciales*, or "differentiating features" of the Basque Country. Although administratively this is one of the 17 "autonomous communities" that make up modern Spain, many Basques refer to it as a "nation" or a "country".

The Basques saw a long-cherished desire for a degree of self-government realised when the Statute of Guernica was signed, and approved by referendum, in 1979. The document was drawn up in the small market town of Guernica, where, according to medieval tradition, Spanish kings travelled to a sacred oak tree to swear respect for the ancient rights of the Basques in the province of Vizcaya. The Basques, in turn, swore their allegiance to the crown. The oak tree still stands in Guernica, though most of the rest of the town was razed by firebombs dropped by the Luftwaffe, which supported General Francisco Franco's nationalist forces in the Spanish Civil War.

For many years Guernica symbolised the repression of the Basque people and their culture by General Franco. The raid on the town inspired a dramatic painting by Picasso, that now hangs in the Reina Sofia museum in Madrid. With Spain's peaceful transition to a democracy, the Basques have finally been given an opportunity to govern themselves, at least in part. The question of how far this self-government should go continues to create political

tension, however, and has spawned a bloody separatist campaign, carried out by the armed Eta group.

Under the terms of the statute, the Basque government has more powers than any of the other 16 regional governments in Spain. It is one of only two regions, along with neighbouring Navarre, with powers to set taxes. The regional government also runs education, health, police and housing in the region. Some of these powers are, in turn, devolved to the provincial *diputaciones*, each with their own small parliament and government, that

run the three provinces. The *diputaciones* collect, and set, nearly all taxes. A *cupo*, an annual percentage payment of tax revenue, is paid to the central government in Madrid to cover the Basque share of communal Spanish services, such as defence and diplomacy.

Tax-raising powers are limited by the obligation to maintain the overall tax pressure at a level close to that set for the rest of Spain by the central

government in Madrid, which is currently run by the Prime Minister, José María Aznar of the conservative Popular Party. In other words, the regional government must raise the same amount of tax as the region would provide if Madrid set its taxes. Regional authorities decide where this money comes from, but they have to meet an annual target, limiting their scope for major alterations to the tax codes.

The Basque Country's special status, and especially its tax powers, attract strong criticism from other autonomous communities, which claim the Basques can, and do, set rates to lure businesses away from other areas. But the region's deputy prime minister, or *vicelehendakari*, Juan José Ibarretxe, says the special status brings responsibility as well as opportunity.

"If we administer well, it should mean that we will have more money to spend," he says. "But it also means that if we do things badly, we will have less."

Like the regional prime minister, or *lehendakari*, José Antonio Ardanza, Señor Ibarretxe is a member of the regionalist Basque Nationalist Party (PNV). This moderate Christian Democratic party has, at least for the foreseeable future, dropped its historic aim of creating an independent Basque state in favour of creating a distinct Basque identity within both Spain and Europe. It has provided the *lehendakari* ever since the first regional elections were held in 1980.

The region's fractured voting pattern, in which six parties all receive about 10 per cent or more of the vote, means that the government is run as a coalition, currently including the regional branch of Spain's Socialist Party (PSE-EE) and another moderate regionalist group, Eusko Alkartasuna (EA).

Polls show that voters approve of the change-over from services being provided by the central government in Madrid to those run by the regional government and the *diputaciones*. One of the regional government's principal targets is to restore Euskara to popular usage, though Señor Ibarretxe stresses it is just as keen for children to learn both good Spanish and a third European language, normally English. Euskara is currently spoken by up to 25 per cent of the population, although it is used as a first language by only a minority of these.

It remains strong in rural areas, where it has withstood both the growth of Spanish and the ban on its official use imposed by Franco for more than 40 years. Little is known about the origins of Euskara. It has been suggested that it is related to Finnish and Hungarian, although more recent studies suggest that it may have emerged from Etruscan, making it the original language of the Iberian peninsula. The language is used alongside Spanish in all branches of the regional administration. Bureaucrats, teachers and police officers are all expected to take exams in it.

While the aspirations of most Basques appear to be satisfied by the current system of limited autonomy, Eta is maintaining a campaign of violence started nearly 30 years ago, before General Franco died. Eta has killed nearly 800 people in that time, and still murders a dozen people every year. It has recently changed tactics by targeting town councillors belonging to Señor Aznar's Popular Party.

The kidnapping and killing of a young PP councillor, Miguel Angel Blanco, last July brought millions of Spaniards on to the streets to protest against the bloodshed. Ardanza is trying to kick-start a peace process, but there is no sign of Eta meeting the Government's condition that it should stop killing first.

Terrorism heightens the political tension, but has little effect on the everyday life in the Basque Country. Tourists who come here to ride the Atlantic surf, walk the foothills of the Pyrenees, or visit the turn-of-the-century seaside town of San Sebastian and the gleaming new Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, rarely notice it.



The new Guggenheim Museum is spearheading the transformation of the metropolitan landscape in the Basque port city of Bilbao

# Sea change on the waterfront

Bilbao, capital of Vizcaya province and the Basque Country's main industrial port and financial centre, is undergoing a dramatic transformation. Its hugely ambitious renewal plan is in some ways similar to that which made Barcelona a focus for tourism and business after it used the staging of the 1992 Olympics Games as an excuse to be reborn.

Barcelona has recovered its sea access and beaches. Now the *bilbaínos*, whose metropolitan area houses 1.12 million people, are to regain their own extensive waterfront on the *ría*, or estuary, of the city's main artery, the Nervión river. In fact, Bilbao is squashed towards the river by the surrounding hills. As in the Catalan capital, unsightly old docks, decaying warehouses and railways are being swept away and replaced with parks, walkways with cultural venues, such as the Guggenheim Museum, and sports centres near uncluttered waterfront developments.

To achieve all of this, a new, larger port is being built with direct access from the sea at the mouth of the river and the regional rail line has been rerouted where it better serves

commuters. Other parts of the overall plan include better access roads, transport interchanges and the new Pta 93,000 million (£372 million) metro, with the first lines already operating between Sir Norman Foster's spacious stations. A new Pta 36,000 million airport terminal designed by Santiago Calatrava is due to open by 2000.

So who is paying for all this? Perhaps feeling green with envy after a visit to the Barcelona Olympics, the Basques put their berets together at the end of 1992 and formed a company, Bilbao Ria 2000. It is equally owned by the Basque authorities and the Spanish central government, the latter through shares taken by state companies involved in the project, such as the railways and the port authority. Part of the income for the new company will come from selling off to developers some of the land freed beside the river and elsewhere in the city.

Pablo Otaola, the managing director of Bilbao Ria 2000, says: "From the centre of Bilbao, the Guggenheim, there are 12km of river to the sea. All of this is port. Now we are constructing a new port by

the sea to have quicker stopovers for more ships, with greater area for docks and warehouses. The first phase will be completed at the end of this year.

"By moving the old port to the new harbour, we are freeing all the land so that urban spaces can be recovered. Only four years ago there were freighters moored next to the Guggenheim site."

A wasteland now stands beside the waterfront but work has started on beautifying this strip, known as *Abandoibarra*, into a riverside park with sculptures. It will adjoin a new shopping centre and office block.

Bordering the park upstream is the Pta 10,000 million Palace of Congress and Music, the *Palacio Euskalduna*, which is due to open this November. It takes its name from the former shipyards on which it is built, and has been designed by the architects Federico Soriano and Dolores Palacios. The congress hall seats 2,200 in various tiers. The orchestra

pit can be raised and lowered in two sections and beyond is the 2,000-square-metre stage. The hall boasts all the latest gadgetry for conferences, including ten infrared simultaneous translation channels. There will be access not only for vehicles but also boats.

One of the huge pillared foyers comprises an exhibition hall of 2,000 square metres that could also seat 1,000 at a banquet. Alongside is a small theatre, seating 600, and other meeting rooms.

"The main auditorium will feature music and opera, which until now has been performed in very small venues in Bilbao," says Señor Otaola. The complex will become the base for the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra. Six other projects are also under way at the moment, three of which are in the city and two in the rundown suburb of Barakaldo, which has a population of 100,000.

"The idea is to finish all the projects within Bilbao Ria 2000 by 2003," says Señor Otaola, adding that the delay in completion has been caused partly by stage-by-stage finance. (In Barcelona the cost came out of regional and state budgets and the

Olympic Games set the 1992 deadline.) A former railway goods yard at Ametzola, near the bull ring, is being turned into an underground rail and metro interchange. Above will be new apartment blocks and a shopping centre around a pleasant park with a lake.

Funding from the European Union of Pta 1,600 million is going towards revitalising Barakaldo, where unemployment is rife and local amenities, if any, are rundown. The filthy waterfront will be transformed into a park, the commercial centre will receive a facelift and new buildings will house centres for training, business and social security. On each side of the suburb will be other centres for job training, for families and for pensioners.

"Another important part is cleaning up the river, and here we hope to do what the English did so successfully with the Thames," says Señor Otaola. The cost of the clean-up is around Pta 100,000 million and the task should be finished by 2001. Bilbao, a city founded in the 13th century, is entering the space age.

EDWARD OWEN



José Antonio Ardanza: stepping down

**POLITICS**  
THE REGIONAL government currently consists of a three-way coalition headed by the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), a moderate regionalist party with strong Christian Democratic influences. PNV has always had the largest group in the regional parliament, where it holds 22 of the 63 seats. Its partners in government are the Basque Socialist Party (PSE-EE) and another regionalist group, Eusko Alkartasuna.

When the current lehendakari, José Antonio Ardanza, stands down after the October elections this year after three spells at the front of a coalition government, his replacement looks certain to be his deputy, Juan José Ibarretxe.

The Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar's conservative Partido Popular (PP) is growing in popularity in the Basque Country but its hard line on terrorism and its centralised tendencies mean that relations between the two groups are naturally tense.

Current rows between the two parties include the extent to which national police forces should share the job of protecting Popular Party councillors in the Basque Country with the regional Ertzaintza force. The PNV in turn accuses Señor Aznar of dragging his feet in completing the task of devolving administrative tasks to the regional government. Señor Ibarretxe says that pensions and employment training are the two main areas still to be handed over.

Herr Batasuna, the separatist party that shares Eta's aims, receives some 12 per cent of the Basque vote. Herr Batasuna's current strategy is unclear. Its 22-member collegiate leadership was jailed last year on charges of collaborating with Eta.

Señor Ibarretxe says that, under his guidance, the Basque government would enter the next century intent on deepening the roots of self-government. This would mean worrying more about what happens in Brussels and less about what happens in Madrid.

# Where a bit of agro can be so relaxing

Since the opening of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao at the end of last year, tourist figures for the Basque region have soared. *Etxepare*, Owen writes. But culture visitors also need fresh air and countryside, so one complementary tourist sector that is also booming thanks to a well-formulated programme implemented by the regional government is *agrotourismo*.

It is based on a network of almost 200 little country hotels and farm houses, often stone-built, with great steep roofs and commanding lovely views. Last year the Basques welcomed a million visitors to their unique land, wedged between the foothills of the Pyrenees, thriving fishing ports on the Bay of Biscay and the vine-covered alluvial plain by the River Ebro.

Almost three quarters of the visitors were other Spaniards, 21 per cent from adjoining France and 16 per cent from Britain. An increasing number of the last are discovering the charms of the country, the fine gastronomic tradition and, of course, the Rioja *hogares*. Ana Esteban, the director of tourism for the Basque Country, says: "We Basques are conscious that our perspective on tourism is starting to change. It's happening rapidly. *Agrotourismo* has been a revolution for country people because traditionally they're just farmers or smallholders. Opening their houses to strangers has changed their lives."



Essential viewing: the medieval walled town of Laguardia in Rioja Alavesa

The Basque agricultural department has helped to finance and supervise the new B&Bs. The average price for a night and a hearty breakfast for a couple is about Pta 5,000 (about £20). Normally tourists have access to the living room and a

kitchen, so they can do their own cooking if they want. Often meals other than breakfast are also offered. There are now plans to categorise the houses by accessibility, setting, style, comfort, local products to offer and tourist information.

A recent tourist department survey showed that almost all the lodgings came up to the required standards, with half achieving good to excellent grades and 11 gems receiving a provisional five-star rating.

"In general the standards are very high and we also stress good food and help for those who want to explore the surrounding country," says Señora Esteban. "We've been very rigorous in our evaluation and standards are rising even more rapidly."

At Easter and during the summer months, the rural B&Bs enjoyed 100 per cent occupancy. The P&O ferry to Bilbao from Portsmouth has carried more than a million passengers to and from the region since its service started five years ago.

Now the regional government is encouraging visitors to spend at least one relaxing and economical night in the Basque countryside with special offers. It has set up a tourist office in Bilbao's quays, where an illustrated list of farmhouses and their amenities is available. If you have not needed for a farmhouse, there are several stone-built, historic, converted old buildings, such as the *Posada*. Mayor de Miyar, who in 1649, the *Antigua Hermandad Don Cosme* Palace and adjoining the town walls, the 100-year-old *El Colado*, with gardens and a tower. Booking at any is essential since they only have a few rooms.

Many of the 90 country houses are easy to arrange. In the old village of Elciego is the famous *hogar* of Marqués de Riscal, where new technology gleams alongside ancient cobblestone cellars and a baronial tasting room. Stay off at the medieval walled town of Laguardia, perched on a hill commanding superb views all round of the vineyards and distant mountains.

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The Government tourist office is in Victoria-Gasteiz, telephone 945 131 321, fax 945 189 931.

# Portrait of a city's new emblem

Bilbao's dazzling Guggenheim Museum, which opened last October, is one of the few late 20th-century buildings that has truly changed the nature of the city in which it is built.

Just four months after it was opened, Frank O. Gehry's glittering, titanium-clad building has established itself as a daring new emblem for a city desperate to cast off the gloomy inheritance of a now faded industrial past.

Its long, anarchic profile, stretching along the banks of the River Nervion, has already come to represent Bilbao in much the same way as the Opera House now symbolises Sydney, Australia.

King Juan Carlos of Spain has proclaimed it "the best building of the 20th century". He is not alone in his admiration. Philip Johnson, the veteran American architect, has described the river-side structure as "the greatest building of our time".

It has already placed Bilbao on the tourist map, attracting 250,000 visitors in its first ten weeks and bringing Atlantic cruise liners into the harbour at nearby Santurzi for the first time in decades.

A series of glamorous visitors has already been welcomed through its doors. "I doubt Oliver Stone or Brad Pitt would have gone to Bilbao if it weren't for the museum," said an administration official.

Britain's Simple Minds pop group was the first of many to use the building as the backdrop of a music video.

Nerea Abasolo, the museum's communications director, says the impact on art and architecture lovers across Europe has been greater than imagined.

"Two weeks after we opened I found a British couple and their two children standing at the doors on Monday morning when the museum was closed. They had flown out specially that morning and were returning the same day. I showed them around myself," she recalls.

The building has an electrifying effect on Bilbao's urban landscape. Its reflective hull blazes with yellow light when the sun catches it. Its curves capture the moving shapes of

the low, fast-moving clouds that scurry across the city almost all year round.

From the opposite bank of the Nervion it appears like a shining, wrecked super-tanker, wedged under an inclined iron road bridge, La Salve, that carries traffic out of the dense city centre.

City authorities have made the museum the centrepiece of an ambitious El Biltzar regeneration programme. It has cost local taxpayers more than \$65 million to build and stock with works from the Guggenheim collection of 20th-century art.

A permanent collection is being built with a starting fund of £20 million of local money.

In return for its investments, the Bilbao museum will receive a rolling display of the

**'Let's face it, Oliver Stone or Brad Pitt would not have gone to Bilbao without the museum'**

Guggenheim modern art collection — 90 per cent of which is kept in storage — and a series of exhibitions that have been shown in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation's headquarters museum in New York. Forthcoming exhibits include more than 400 pieces of Chinese art dating back 5,000 years and individual shows of work by Robert Rauschenberg and Helen Frankenthaler.

Gehry has built a museum designed for the outsized art of the late 20th century. His inspiration for the shape and the materials — principally glass, titanium and stone — came from the city's shipbuilding and steel-making past.

The building itself has 28,000 square yards of floor space, dwarfing other modern museums. It doubles Paris's Pompidou Centre in both height and length. One critic has compared the largest of its 18 galleries — more than 100 yards long and 30 yards across — to a freight warehouse. The cathedral-sized central atrium soars up 150ft. Inside its galleries are examples of every

current of modern art, from Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism to Pop Art and the latest British art.

Among the British artists whose works have found a new home in these exciting, and occasionally challenging, new exhibition spaces are Damien Hirst and Gilbert and George. There is also work here from such modern art luminaries as Rothko, Warhol, Kandinsky, Giacometti, Picasso and Pollock.

The Guggenheim is not without controversy. Gunmen from the armed Basque separatist group ETA made their own bloody contribution to its inauguration by killing an officer from the regional police forces who discovered them trying to plant a bomb in a Jeff Koons flower sculpture.

An ongoing political row also rages over the absence of Picasso's *Guernica*, which

local politicians had demanded be sent north from Madrid's Reina Sofia museum. Authorities there, however, claimed that the vast, sombre depiction of the destruction of the historic Basque town of Guernica by Franco's German allies during the Spanish Civil War was too fragile to travel.

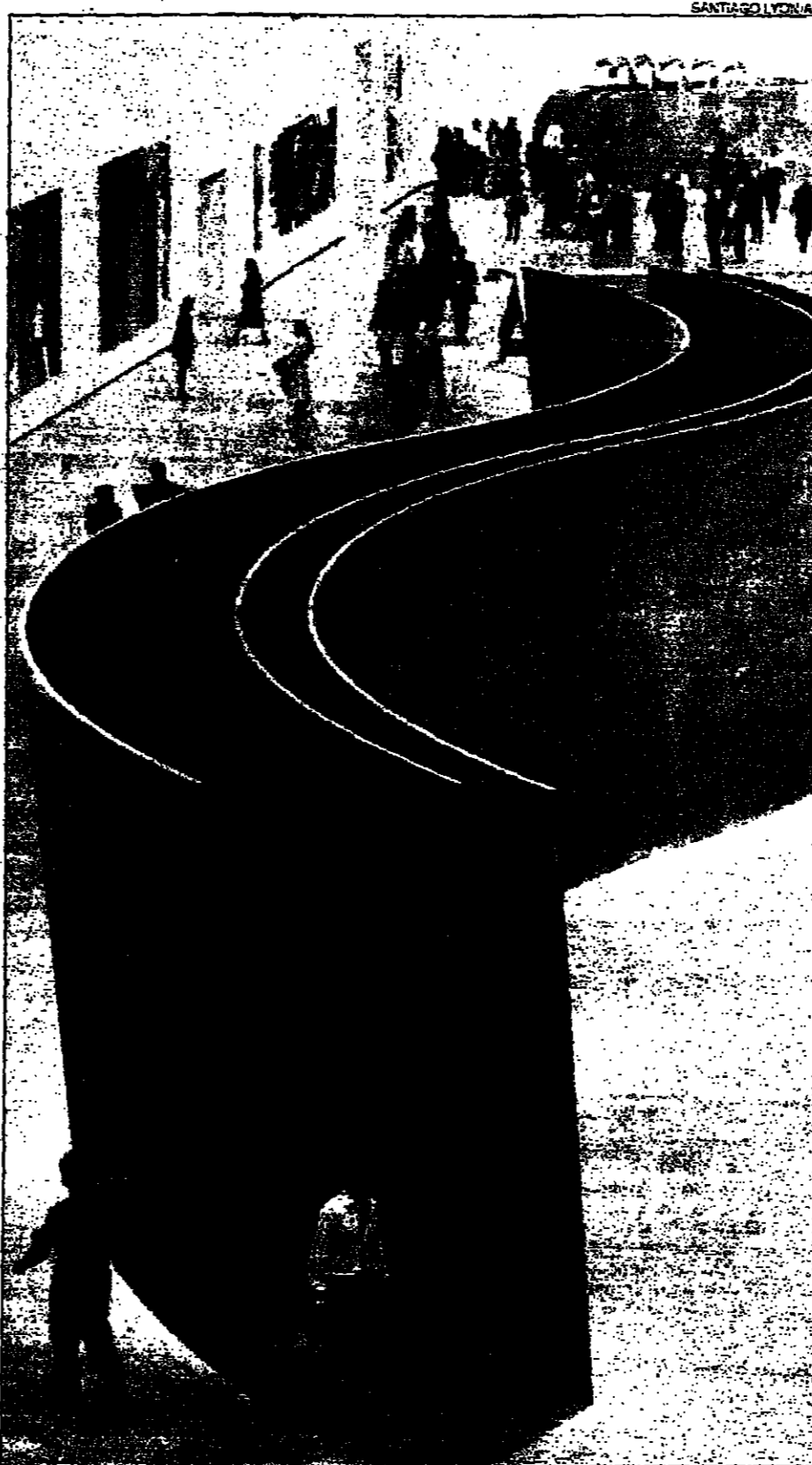
Esperanza Aguirre, the Culture Minister, agreed. Guernica lies just 20 miles east of Bilbao.

Local art critics worry that this new Guggenheim Museum will be given only the leftovers from New York. But the Guggenheim Foundation's president, Thomas Krens, has lived up to his promise that there is more than enough art in the New York vaults to satisfy even the most demanding of modern art lovers.

The museum also promotes both local Basque artists, such as the sculptor Eduardo Chillida, and Spanish artists, such as Barcelona's Antoni Tàpies and Miguel Barceló.

Visitors who find modern art difficult to digest should find the building, itself a tribute to modern art forms, enough to satisfy their curiosity. But day-trippers note: it closes on Mondays.

GILES TREMLETT



Daring and dazzling: the Guggenheim Museum, showing Richard Serra's *The Snake*

# Historical ties bind bank to its motherland

BANKING

Although the Basque Country owes its wealth to the industries that flourished here during the first half of this century, the Basque enterprise that has spread its wings widest is Banco Bilbao Vizcaya, now rated among the world's largest.

Giles Tremlett writes. The BBV has long since outgrown the city and the province of Vizcaya, where its component parts started doing business. It is now Spain's most profitable bank and jostles for the title of the country's number one with Banco Santander.

The bank still has its headquarters in a grand old building in Bilbao, but much of its business is run from Madrid. BBV's president, Emilio Ybarra y Churrua, has two offices, one in each building, and he and a number of executives split their time between Bilbao and Madrid.

While BBV considers itself as an international institution, it retains some markedly Basque characteristics. Señor Ybarra y Churrua is from an old Basque family and most of his board members and senior executives also have long, tongue-twisting Basque surnames.

Like other Spanish banks, BBV has grown rapidly over the past few years. Its buoyant share price has given it the largest stock market rise in the world's top 100 banks over the past three years.

Señor Ybarra y Churrua says the bank now measures itself against international, not domestic, competitors. "We are a point of reference for European banks," he told shareholders recently.

BBV's international aspirations go back a long way. A predecessor, Banco de Bilbao, opened offices in

London and Paris before branching out to Madrid. Nowadays bank executives define BBV as a "European and Latin American" bank.

The Latin American part of its operation is a relatively new, but highly significant, addition. Spanish banks have led a reconquest by Spain of Latin American businesses over the past five years. Nearly a quarter of BBV's £78 billion assets are now in Latin America, which provided 27 per cent of the group's pre-tax income of £930 million last year.

With its Latin American purchases nearly complete, BBV must now turn its attention to Europe. The arrival of the new common currency, the euro, is expected to bring consolidation throughout Europe's banking sector.

Spain's stock exchange, which has pushed BBV's value up some 30 per cent so far this year, clearly expects Señor Ybarra y Churrua to buy up smaller Spanish banks or be pushed into a merger with another large European bank. But he says: "We are not going to increase our size just for size's sake."

Instead he has tightened shareholding rules to ward off potentially hostile bids from Europe's biggest banks and has announced that he is looking for European alliances.

The company's Basque personality now owes more to its emotional and historical ties to the region than to its financial commitment there. And, as any job-hunting economics undergraduate from Bilbao's Deusto University will tell you, it is still home to many of the region's brightest business brains.

GILES TREMLETT

# Moving into top gear

The Basque Country has undergone a profound change in the past two decades. Once dominated by heavy industry such as steel works and shipbuilding, it remains one of Europe's main industrial regions, thanks to scaling down and diversifying with thousands of smaller, mainly complementary, firms.

Metal cutting and forming account for more than 40 per cent of the sector. Automotive components from "just-in-time" factories, which supply clients as and when required, comprise a big slice of Basque business. So it is no surprise that analysts cite a Basque vehicle manufacturer as one of the latest success stories in the valleys of Euskadi.

Koldo Saratzaga, 50, is the embodiment of the successful Basque industrialist who has studied hard, and gained the confidence and harnessed the energy of his employees before conquering the world with their product. Señor Saratzaga, born in Vizcaya, studied as a technical engineer, subsequently gained two master's degrees and worked for a number of companies within the Mondragón Corporación Cooperativa (MCC) in Leizor.

MCC is considered a role model for industrial co-operatives — it employs 100 companies employing 30,000 people and boasts an annual turnover of Ptas 630,000 million (£2.5 billion).

At the end of 1991 Señor Saratzaga was appointed director-general of Irizar, an ailing bus manufacturer

under the MCC umbrella. Irizar had been founded in 1899, but had fallen to nowhere in the domestic market. Within a few years Señor Saratzaga turned Irizar into one of the most successful specialist coach builders, exporting to 32 countries and with joint-venture factories in China, Morocco and Brazil.

Irizar buses have won many awards, including in Britain. Coach of the Year in 1994 and 1997, with another model named Executive Coach of 1997.

Señor Saratzaga himself was named Most Entreprenising Spanish Businessman of the Year in 1996.

"When I arrived at the end of 1991, the company was practically bankrupt. It had a good product but virtually no company strategy," says Señor Saratzaga. "We explained the situation to the employees and made a great effort, through salary reductions, streamlining manufacture and design, eliminating non-profitable sales and counting more on the workers."

Inspiring teamwork and embarking on an aggressive export drive were vital. "Before, we exported only 10 per cent to three countries, but at a loss. We defined our policy country by country and looked for markets for our product

rather than planning more models. Now Irizar is possibly the coach builder with the fewest products but, after Mercedes, it is in the most countries. We wanted to develop, to double-deckers, with little attention to interior detail, too much plastic and too little comfort.

"We have put ourselves in the highest niche of luxury buses, starting with the most demanding markets: Germany, Britain, Scandinavia and Italy. We have been improving our buses with the demands and necessities of each country. Some request really interesting things that are later appreciated in other countries."

Irizar markets the high-tech, futuristic-looking Century and the smaller, medium-range InterCentury, both with eye-catching, multi-coloured paintwork. The target for this year is 840 units, compared with 694 in 1997.

The overall design was created and developed with another MCC company, Diara. Security exceeds the rigorous specifications required in the UK and Spain.

**'Our people have a great capacity for teamwork'**

Features include anti-roll devices, roll bars and safety seats. Passenger seatbelts are fitted if the client wants. Seven makes of engine are available. Prices range from £100,000 to £200,000 for each bus.

Irizar has supplied both the English football team and Aston Villa with luxury coaches equipped with leather seats, tables, TV and video, phone, fax, bar and full catering facilities.

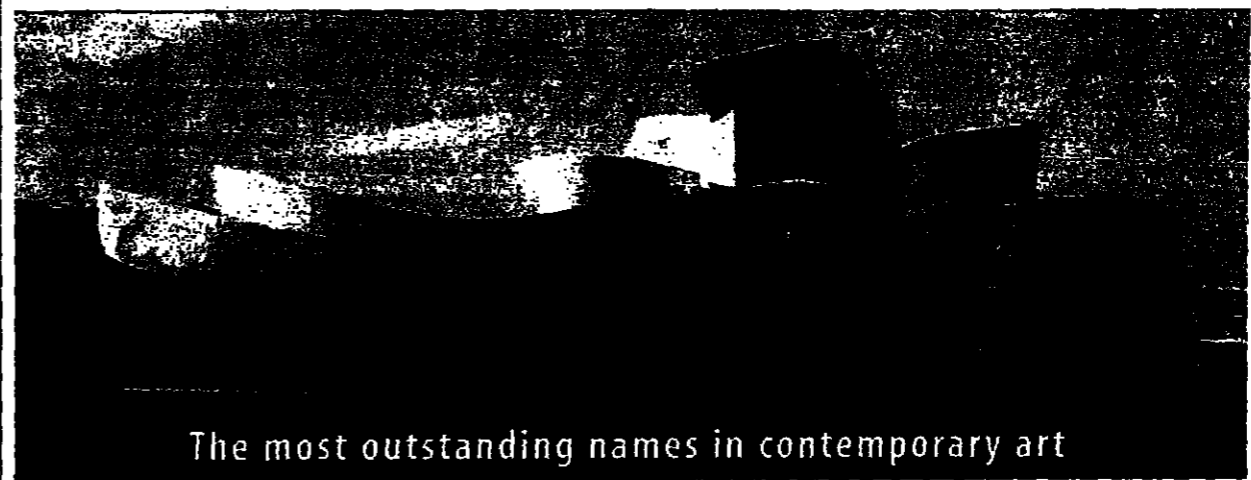
Irizar's factory in China was opened 1995 as a joint venture with a state company in Tianjin, near Beijing. Irizar has a 38 per cent stake and runs the factory, which produced 230 tour coaches and 180 urban buses last year. Eight months ago Irizar started another joint venture in Rabat, Morocco, with a local family, and plans to produce 220 coaches and 100 urban buses this year.

In June, Irizar opens in Brazil with Caio, one of the world's largest manufacturers of city buses. The 50-50 venture will make luxury coaches for most of the Latin American market. The company has also just got its first order for 30 buses from the United States, through its agent in Atlanta, Georgia.

Señor Saratzaga says: "We are enterprising people. We work so hard on the land that when we face the world we do well. Our people are very responsible, adventurous and have a great capacity for teamwork."

EDWARD OWEN

Picasso, Kandinsky, Modigliani, Klee, Pollock, Mondrian, Lichtenstein, Malinowski, Bacon, Warhol...



The most outstanding names in contemporary art have got together in the Basque Country.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM BILBAO

### The Foundation's Major Arts initiative in Europe

The Basque Country has a new rendezvous for art lovers from all over the world. A museum of modern and contemporary art of the highest order: the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

The Museum is a major European initiative of the prestigious Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, one of this century's most remarkable cultural phenomena.

It is also the culmination of another measure designed to promote the Basque Country worldwide.

### A new enterprise in the land of good business

The Guggenheim Foundation is the latest in a long line of major world concerns to spot the full potential of the Basque Country.

A hardworking, dynamic place with a flair for business, with high quality industry, cutting-edge technology and an international outlook. A place where the quality of training for human resources and living standards in general exert a powerful attraction on the big business names.

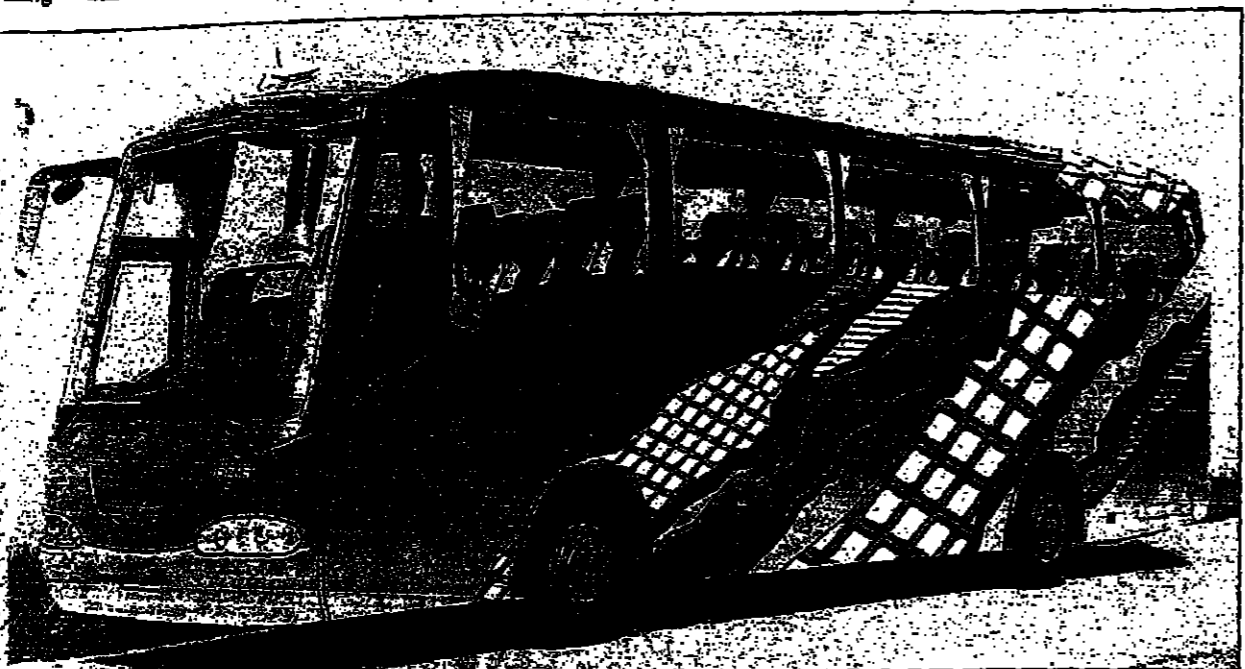
Firms like Daewoo, Mercedes-Benz, Rolls-Royce, Ericsson or Ikaemer, for instance, all of them have been happy to invest in the Basque Country, attracted by the amazing range of business potential.

And now the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, an outstanding leisure and cultural attraction, has joined their ranks.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Tel.: (34-945) 18 80 92 - Fax: (34-945) 18 80 81  
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SPRI, THE BASQUE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
Bilbao, Basque Country, (Spain)  
Tel.: (34-94) 479 70 12 - Fax: (34-94) 479 70 23



The Basque Country is one of Europe's main industrial regions: buses made by Irizar are found all over the world

# If it works, why not do it on the cheap?

Fame has not spoilt Quentin Tarantino - he still made *Jackie Brown* on a shoestring. Lesley O'Toole reports

It has been said, reportedly by Quentin Tarantino himself, that *Jackie Brown* (reviewed opposite) is "the least Tarantino-esque" film he has ever made, being palpably more character-driven and substantially less graphically violent than his trademark. The man himself denies vehemently that he would ever use such words. "I don't think I have or ever will use the expression 'Tarantino-esque'. I don't know what that is, all right?" He may not say "Tarantino-esque", but he concludes virtually every sentence with "all right".

"The thing you may be taking from this is that everyone expected *Pulp Fiction* to be like *Reservoir Dogs* and it wasn't. And some people expect *Jackie Brown* to be like *Pulp Fiction* and it's not like either of those."

"You can tell I did all three but I'm not a rock star, I'm making individualistic films. We all know directors out there who make a certain kind of film and that's the kind of film they always make. There's nothing wrong with that, God bless them, but I don't want to be that."

Tarantino would rather be compared, further along in his career perhaps, with "the older, professional Hollywood directors - people like Howard Hawks, whose films had a certain individual flavour about them, but the films were the films. I don't want anyone to go see the latest Quentin film. I want you to go see the next Quentin film."

The next Quentin film will probably be bigger than this one, in every respect. *Jackie Brown's* budget was an inconceivably small \$12 million, less than even a Hollywood superwoman's salary for one film. "Even if I had spent \$25 million, what would it have bought us?" Tarantino says. "The only thing it would have gone into was salaries." Clearly, the likes of Robert De Niro and Samuel L. Jackson do not work for Tarantino for the pay cheques, although it is likely that the cast has a back-end deal (a proviso in their contracts providing for additional remuneration once the film clears a profit).

Tarantino has spoken vehemently against ludicrously high star salaries, some of which are monsters of his own making. John Travolta, enjoying the fruits of a celebrated

new career thanks largely to his part in Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, was one of the first to establish the \$20 million salary benchmark.

"I really do feel it's a goose killing the golden egg," says Tarantino. You know what he means. "I don't know if the industry can withstand it. Of course, people say, 'Well, would you turn down \$20 million?' Well, I have turned it down. Maybe not \$20 million, but if I put myself on the market with the right kind of material, I could get a certain price that would push every other director's salary up by another \$3 million. I could do

**"I do what I can as a businessman so I can do what I want as an artist"**

that, but I made less for making *Jackie Brown* than I did on *Pulp Fiction*."

He might make his films cheaper still, extolling his own freedom "to go backwards if I choose. If I want to make a film for \$5 million, I will."

*Jackie Brown's* American box office takings (just over \$40 million) do not have blockbuster credentials. But the film has been far from a commercial flop, having made back both its filming and press and advertising budget, an enormous expense, from its domestic release alone.

This achievement has been little-noted in an industry still gripped with *Titanic*-mania. But everything Tarantino says makes perfect logistical sense. "At this price, we can't lose. I want all my movies to be hits, I want them all to be successful so I'm going to do what I can as a responsible businessman with my own company to make sure I can do everything I want to do as an artist, so that we're all going to be OK in the end."

Tarantino did not work to keep his budget low; he worked to make his characters legitimately believable ones. "I do think this film has a special kind of realism. They don't feel like movie characters to me

and it's not a movie about people that normally get movies made about them, all right? There's a live-in-ness to them. There's a reality that you can just know, even if you're coming from another country and you don't know these people at all. You always know the truth when you hear it, all right?"

Tarantino grew up in the very environs *Jackie Brown* frequents, the area around Los Angeles airport where no one who's anyone in Hollywood lives. For the purposes of veracity, he cast a real California girl as the pot-smoking beach bum Melanie - the luminous Bridget Fonda - rather than his then-girlfriend Mira Sorvino, whom he also considered. Unusually, Tarantino utilised real sets - actual apartments, a real bull bonds office - and calls the sacrifice for the sake of realism "a pain in the ass. It would have been much easier to have built sets, but we shot in a beach apartment for example, something not known for its size. And you know what, I've heard directors say that you can tell."

As different as *Jackie Brown* is from both *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*, crime remains the cornerstone of the film. Clearly, this theme is far from played out in Tarantino's mind. "If at the end of five movies, I've only done crime movies, then I promise you, on my sixth one I will make a different one," he says. "But I've only directed three movies, all right, so I shouldn't be thinking about stuff like that right now."

"I'm fascinated by criminal behaviour and seem to understand that mindset. None of these people is going to play the lower level of any game that is offered to them and I am the same way in my chosen profession."

"Criminals behave in a way that makes criminal behaviour seem a legitimate profession, at least in their own minds. There are codes of professionalism involved which they don't view as any kind of alienation of society. They are businessmen wanting to do a job well."

Tarantino is a businessman whose business plans should be better read. And, whatever happens, he'll be more than OK in the end.



Quentin Tarantino in film noir mood. Fans of the opening scenes in *Cool Hand Luke* will recognise the prop

### NEW ON VIDEO

**AIR FORCE ONE**  
*Buena Vista, 15, 1997*  
FORGET about credibility, just sit back and enjoy the preposterous plight of Harrison Ford's American President, whose aircraft hijacked soon after leaving Moscow. Gary Oldman as Satanic charm as the hijacker's leader, angling to see the release from jail of a fascist general, while Ford hides in the aircraft's underbelly and eventually puts his Vietnam training to use. Wolfgang Petersen is good at sustaining tension in close quarters (remember *Das Boot*), but give the film several climaxes in many. Available to rent.

**AMERICAN BUFFALO**  
*VCI/Film Four, 15, 1996*  
DAVID MAMET'S early plot about smalltime crooks plotting a robbery gets powerful screen treatment from *Dust* Hoffman as the sleazy criminal Teach and Dennis Frai (from *NYPD Blue*) as the junk shop owner with a smidgen of conscience. Director Michael Corrente scarcely opens the play, but Mamet's torrent of words keeps us engaged.

**THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK**  
*CIC, PG, 1997*  
TWO versions are available: Spielberg's dinosaur romp "widescreen" edition, with strips of black at the top and bottom of the frame, and a edition where the image is doctored, but fills the available space. Neither version solves the film's real weakness: its threadbare script and the inevitable decline in the novel value of dinosaurs chewing up humans. Jeff Goldblum stars with Julianne Moore.

**THE SIN OF HAROLD DIDDLEBOCK**  
*Bareka, U, 1997*  
TWO very different comic talents, the silent clown Harold Lloyd and director Preston Sturges, created this uneven but engaging oddity (Lloyd's last film). The idea of taking Lloyd's go-getting character from the 1920s and seeing how he copes with middle age is good one, and Sturges's dialogue is a delight to hear. But the video print cannot be described as sparkling.

GEOFF BROWN

Matthew Barney's stunning *Cremaster 5* opens in London tomorrow. Isabel Carlisle reports

## Ursula Andress is now a work of art

In the notoriously fickle New York art scene, 30-year-old Matthew Barney is something of a phenomenon. One of the most talked-about young artists in New York, he remains outwardly unmoved by his growing success. When his latest creation, a 54-minute film titled *Cremaster 5*, starring Ursula Andress, is given a seven-day screening from tomorrow, British audiences will be given a taste of Barney's strange but compelling imagery.

Barney's art (a combination of installation, sculpture, film, photography and drawing) draws on an entirely self-enclosed world. Its inner logic is dominated by place and architecture and inhabited by fantastic beings in search of an unattainable equilibrium. His work is perilously close to being over the top, but it is pulled back by the utter conviction that he clearly feels for it. Without any irony, Barney lives, breathes and sleeps his world of the imagination.

In *Cremaster 5*, Andress is the tragic Queen of Charn, playing opposite Barney himself who is, by turns, a Magician, a Diva and a Giant. Filmed almost entirely between midnight and dawn in Budapest's Opera House and the thermal baths beneath the city's Gellert Hotel, with underwater scenes shot in New York, the tale is on the epic proportions of life and death, love and loss. Andress mouths a dubbed libretto in Hungarian to an operatic score written by Barney's collaborator, Jonathan Belpor.

Sitting in the royal box of the opera house, attended by two identical oriental pages, Andress is alone except for the orchestra in the pit and the Diva, dressed in pink, who journeys around the proscenium arch. Glimpses of a watery underworld show the Giant, attended by sprites and doves trailing ribbons.

Barney went to Yale to study medicine, but soon abandoned it to switch to art. "At the same time as I was looking at the scientific language I was body-building and evolving a visual language," he says. "In college I did some five performances, then got into video, feeling the need to document the performance, and became more interested in editing."

Barney would create a kind of artist's assault course to make the act of drawing more difficult - "I would do things like jump on a trampoline and

make a mark on the ceiling each time."

The escapist Harry Houdini is one of Barney's heroes and Budapest, Houdini's birthplace, was early on destined to be the setting for one of the five films in the cyclical *Cremaster* series. Like Houdini, Barney places the greatest physical demands on himself. As the Magician he sits naked in the bitter cold of a January night on the parapet of the Lanchester Bridge over the Danube, twisted into the pose of a Renaissance statue, and finally leaps towards the water, held by a concealed bungee line. For his performance as the Diva Barney was invisibly roped on his climb across the top of the opera house's proscenium arch and down to the stage, but not on the ascent.

Barney says: "You could look at Houdini as someone who willingly takes on the shackle, blindfold and straitjacket as the means to a creative end. Houdini left Budapest for America, denying his past and re-inventing himself, so *Cremaster 5* is also a piece about separation anxiety."

What makes Barney's work art rather than film? Barbara Gladstone, Barney's dealer, says: "There is no linear narrative, so in that sense it does not obey the laws of film. Plus it is like a work of art in that you need to keep on looking, you see something new each time."

Despite being made on low budgets (less than \$200,000 for *Cremaster 5*), the films are technically outstanding, with special effects devised by Barney and realised by his group of assistants. Four people work with him fulltime in the studio, while the costumes and prosthetics, such as the foam latex appliances on the feet, genitals, nipples, eyebrows and ears of the water sprites, are made outside. The profit from each film, largely derived from selling a series of ten laser discs in sculpted packaging to museums and collectors, is ploughed back into the

next project. Although Barney is successful, he is hardly rich. Barney will be occupied in making *Cremasters 2* and *3* until 2000, when he has an exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum. It will be his first major New York show, at which all five of the *Cremaster* films will be shown together, *Cremaster 3* for the first time. Will he still be able to duck the pressure of fame? Gladstone is well aware that for an

artist "the people who talk you up bring you down too. You have to have the inner strength to cope with that. Matthew's studio is what preserves him and keeps his mind focused on his work."

*Cremaster 5* will be shown at the Metro Cinema, Rupert Street London W1 from tomorrow to March 26. Matthew Barney will give a talk after the screening on Saturday. For more information, call 0171-336 6623

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**Ursula Andress** talking it over

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Ursula Andress is the queen in *Cremaster 5*

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown sees the enfant terrible of gags and gore grow up in impressive style with Jackie Brown

# Tarantino's reservoir of pithy fiction

The opening is breathtaking. The camera follows as she runs through doors, down corridors, bashing the odd shoulder on the way, desperate to get to the airport gate and her job, in time. She works for an airline at the bottom of the barrel, flying from Mexico to the States. Her name? Jackie Brown.

But our eyes, at first, see only the performer. She is Pam Grier, fiery and shapely star of black exploitation movies in the 1970s, but star of little else since. Until, that is, Quentin Tarantino's magic wand restored John Travolta to life. Now it is Grier's turn, as an air hostess cum money smuggler in her forties, trying to wriggle free of trouble after being caught on arrival at Los Angeles with a fat stash of loot.

This is Tarantino's third feature as a director, and his best, although those who worship the designer violence of *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* may not see it that way. True, you get golden oldies woven into the soundtrack (Bobby Womack's *Across 110th Street* is especially evocative). But when violence occurs, the bullets fly off-screen. Instead of artful studio sets, the action unravels on real locations: a shopping mall, a bail-bonding office, the streets and corners of Los Angeles's South Bay area.

Characters matter more than action, and they are characters Tarantino did not originate: the film is an adaptation of *Rum Punch*, one of the novels of Elmore Leonard, comic chronicler of low-life crime and author of *Get Shorty*. From one standpoint, this is Tarantino reined in. From another, this is Tarantino matured, probing deeper into his material, squeezing out a few drops of human kindness.

Be warned: this is no high drama. There is not much cumulative excitement as Brown tangles with Samuel L. Jackson's lustigious gun-runner, Michael Keaton's feckless agent, Robert Forster's weary bailbondsmen, Robert De Niro's volatile scumbag and Bridget Fonda's surfer girl. But the film works splendidly as a succession of scenes, often caught in serendipitous camera takes that encourage the excellent cast to delineate characters with light and shade.

For sheer screen charisma, Grier's bruised heroine (a white woman in the novel) easily takes the prize. But Forster's bailbondsmen, sympathetic and vulnerable, another drudge wearied by life, exerts a quiet spell as he works with Brown at playing both sides against each other.

Next to Forster's natural ease, Jackson shows signs of strain as Brown's companion in illegal deals, spouting dialogue heavily spattered with words beginning with f and n. Or perhaps it is Tarantino pushing too hard, the white man ostentatiously hanging out with his black brothers.

But Jackson's performance gradually develops real comic force, as he struts about, believing himself cleverer than he is, trying to keep his drugged sidekick De Niro in line. With all the characters, Tarantino takes time to look



"A human comedy played out on authentic locations with the relaxed control that hides great skill": Bridget Fonda, Robert De Niro and Samuel L. Jackson in Jackie Brown

**Jackie Brown**  
Empire, 15, 154 mins  
Tarantino grows up  
**The Man in the Iron Mask**  
Odeon West End, 12, 132 mins  
Leonardo DiCaprio times two  
**Gattaca**  
Warner West End, 15, 106 mins  
Cool and chic sci-fi  
**The River**  
ICA Cinema, 115 mins  
Mastery film from Taiwan  
love etc.  
Curran Mayfair, 15, 105 mins  
A Julian Barnes novel becomes a French trifle

more to offer than smart dialogue and corpses.

Another current movie idol dominates *The Man in the Iron Mask*, and many indifferent to the literary charms of Alexandre Dumas or the mysteries of 17th-century French history will plunk down their coins just to gaze upon Leonardo DiCaprio. He comes in two versions: DiCaprio I is the arrogant and hated young king, Louis XIV, resident in brocade, long hair curving over the shoulders, smirking lips. DiCaprio II, gentle, be-wildered, squats in the Bastille, a mask clamped over his face until three ageing Musketeers liberate him and two barbers hack away at the grime and hair of seven years' imprisonment.

During a royal masked ball DiCaprio II is substituted for I for the good of the nation. With a little help from computer wizardry and a trusty stand-in, the two mingle in the same shot. Both, incidentally, keep their clothes on.

DiCaprio's performances are engaging and nicely contrasted. The Musketeers do their bit as well, despite being forced to say "All for one, one for all" many more times than is sensible. The screenplay, indeed, is flat and gormless: you expect more salt with the clichés from Randall Wallace, the man who wrote *Braveheart*. He also directs, very dully. "If Philippe is in the Bastille, then to the Bastille we will go": this is Athos (John Malkovich) speaking. Dialogue for Aramis (Jeremy Irons) and d'Artagnan (Gabriel Byrne) is slightly better,

Gérard Depardieu's Porthos, however, spends his time as the comedy relief, bemoaning his age and farting.

Wallace, indeed, seems the principal reason why the film proves so drab. Each time DiCaprio sparkles, Wallace douses him with cold water. No burst of action is as exciting as it should be, no piece of humour bright enough to offset the gloom cast by Wallace's direction, or the grey slabs of Anthony Pratt's sets. This is most frustrating. Nobody made this film to respect Dumas, or history: they made it for fun. So where is it?

**G**attaca contains more dialogue that will live forever.

"You keep your work station so clean, Jerome": these are the first words uttered by the florid person of Gore Vidal, chief of the Gattaca Corporation, a futuristic temple to the genetically pure. But then everything is clean in this sci-fi movie, directed with dazzlingly streamlined style by Andrew Niccol, a New Zealander trained in commercials. And the more you gaze at the cold, sleek image, the further you feel from the characters' fates.

Do we care if Ethan Hawke ever boards the spaceship to Titan? Not a jot. Or falls in love with Uma Thurman? You joke, madam. Do we worry that somebody will twig that Hawke, genetically imperfect, has swapped identities with a paraplegic played by Jude Law? Just a scrap, perhaps. But we worry far more where

the director's pretensions will take him, or whether the diverting supporting cast — Vidal aside, there is Alan Arkin and the 80-year-old Ernest Borgnine — will ever have enough to do. They do not. Nor do we, really.

*The River*, from the Taiwanese director Tsai Ming-liang, keeps us very busy. There are symbols to fathom, cryptic business to decode, and long takes to sit through without forgetting. There is also a young and masterly film-maker to meet, although festival audiences need no introduction to the director of *Rebels of the Neon God* and

*Vive l'amour*. Dysfunctional family life and urban alienation are favourite Taiwanese themes, but Tsai pursues them with more rigour and poetry than most. As before his young lead is played by Lee Kang-Sheng: the character develops excruciating neck pains after immersing himself in a polluted river while working as a film extra. Father and mother have problems of their own. Water cascades from the empty flat above. And where can anyone find sexual gratification? No wisps of plot, however, can properly suggest the film's stark beauty, black humour and emotional resonance. You just have to experience the power of *The River* for yourself.

The week's final film, love etc., is another French work-out among youngsters people thwarted in love. The director is Marion Vernoux: the material comes from Julian Barnes's novel. Talking it Over, Marie marries Pierre's best friend Benoit and a romantic triangle is formed. The central players — Charlotte Gainsbourg, Yvan Attal, Charles Berling — are variously charming, and many moments are neatly observed. But like musical triangles, the film makes no lasting impact.

## SNAP VERDICT

### 'Film of the year so far'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

**JACKIE BROWN**  
Dom Young, 19: The script, cast and direction are masterly. Possibly the best film so far this year.

Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 20: Quentin Tarantino is king. *Titanic*, eat dirt. Ruth Sullivan, 21: Pam Grier and Robert Forster are outstanding in this stylish and enthralling crime flick.

Tim Thornton, 21: Having adored Tarantino's previous outings, I found this an uncharacteristically plodding film.

**THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK**

Dom: Poor script, poor direction and embarrassing performances.

Leslie: How the great have fallen. Should Jeremy Irons and John Malkovich really be in a film of this quality?

Ruth: Forget the fact that none of the cast can seem to agree on an accent, and you will enjoy this lavish, action-packed movie.

Tim: A far from perfect film but a wonderfully swash-buckling adventure.

**GATTACA**

Dom: Surprisingly good. What a great story. Leslie: This film had a highly original story line and competent performances. Check it out.

Ruth: An ingenious thriller that does not quite achieve as much as it hoped for.

Tim: *Brazil* meets *No Way Out*. I found this whole thing mesmerising from start to finish.

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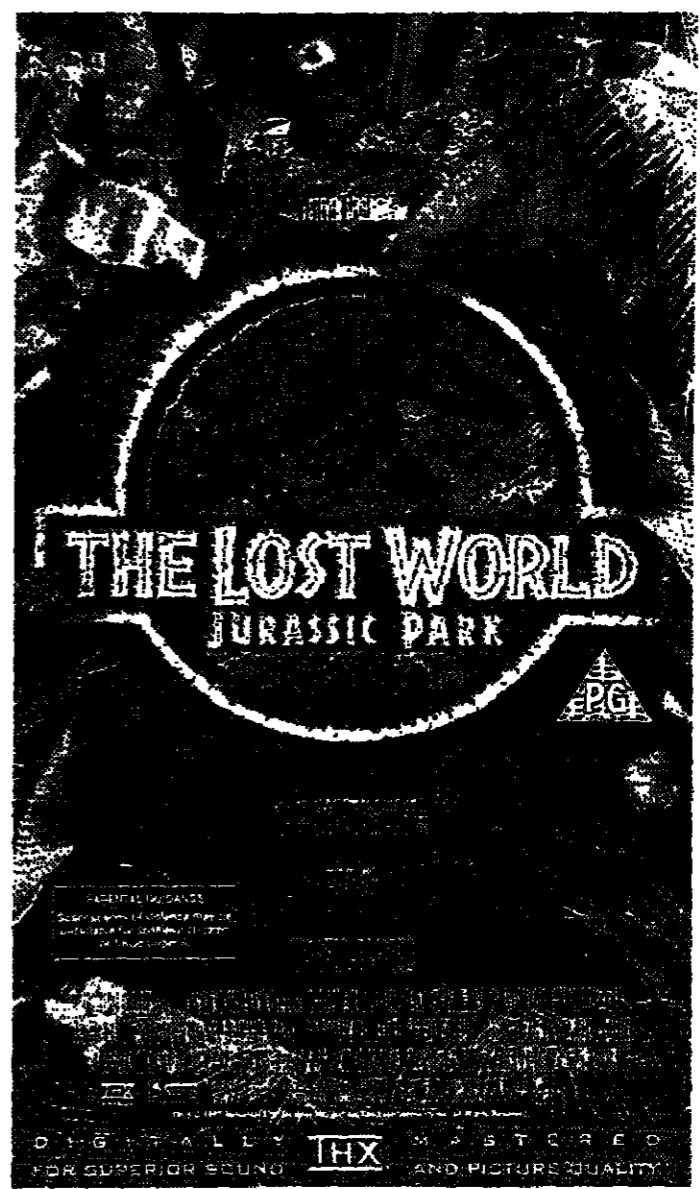


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40 ARTS AND LEISURE

Quest of a restless spirit

locked in a magic moment

LONDON

CLOSER The National Theatre production of Pinar Wolf's play about a young woman's life...

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargre

ELSEWHERE

EDINBURGH: The noted Hungarian pianist Deza Ranko joins the Scottish Chamber Orchestra...



Wayne Marshall plays the organ in Manchester

Manchester: Wayne Marshall is tonight's soloist with the Hallé Orchestra in a performance of Liszt's Organ Concerto...

LONDON GALERIES

Barbican: The Art of Calligraphy (171-438 8801) British Museum: Islamic and Indian Paintings from the Collection of Prince Arif Habib...

Ever since he burst onto the American dance scene in the 1970s, Bill T. Jones has been a political animal...



Formation dancing: Bill T. Jones's company gives We Set Out Early... Visibility Was Poor its European premiere

Given his track record, his latest creation, We Set Out Early... Visibility Was Poor, which had its European premiere at the Barbican Theatre on Tuesday...

The first section, costumed in black and white, is danced to a 1917 score. Stravinsky's acerbic Soldier's Tale. The bustling dancers may not know where they are heading (who really does?)...

Then, as the lighting changes from night to heavenly blue, the cart levitates to hover over the action. Now it looks like some child's drawing of a space ship...

APCALYPTICA

Second Philip Ridley play in the New Directions season, seven people left alone in a war zone...

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

Family's night out

POP

The frocks don't matter

OPERA

PERA

Contrary to the impression given by advance press coverage and some deeply embarrassing adverts...

NEW RELEASES

AS GOOD AS IT GETS (15): Obsessive-compulsive Jack Nicholson turns to become a better person...

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and others

IN & OUT (12)

Can Kevin Kline's English teacher possibly be gay? Appearing mainstream comedy...

THE MAMAM ET LA PUTAIN (18)

Young French man in love with an older woman. Reveals of Jean Eustache's mastery...

THE GREAT ESCAPE (19)

Alan Rickman's war film. A gripping tale of escape from a POW camp...

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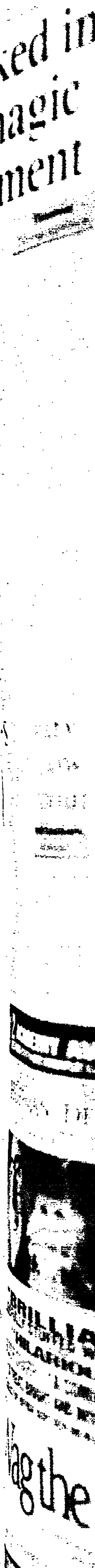
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THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 19 1998

# Locked in a magic moment

In Kevin Elyot's *The Day I Stood Still*, a 40-plus man is emotionally marooned in the moment when the fellow-adolescent he loved and lost gave him a gold chain. That's sad, but maybe not as sad as the predicament of the four Glaswegians of David Greig's *Timeless*. They are not yet into middle age, and already they are sustained by little but the memory of the magic night — a picnic on a beach with booze and a bonfire — they spent together a few years ago.

Tennessee Williams said somewhere that in the memory there is always music. Greig and his director, Graham Eatough, take that thought further. They have imported a string quartet to sit behind the glass of the café where the piece is set, playing music that is variously doleful, edgy, bland and intense.

As with Elyot's, the play spins through time. However, it gives us not only past and present, but a future that is so confused and contradictory it must be more wishful fantasy than likely fact. Moreover, Keith Macpherson's ineffective Ian, Paul Thomas Hickey's abrasive Martin, Molly Innes's laid-back Stella and Kate Dickie's eager Veronica spend a fair amount of time staring at their own reflections or launching into reverie or communicating with stylised gestures or choric mutterings of "sorry" or "good".

If I say that the effect is of Virginia Woolf and Debussy reworking *The Big Chill*, I will, I suppose, make the evening sound terminally pretentious. But the Scots com-

pany involved. Suspect Culture, does not forget content in its obsession with style, nor sacrifice incisiveness for atmosphere. Not all the changes that occur between youth and impending middle age are explained — why does Martin begin by having an affair with Stella and end up unhappily preparing to marry Veronica? — but the decline of the characters is plausible.

All is youthful energy and movement on the dry Veronican introduces herself to the others and, despite their cynicism, lures them to the beach. But by the time of their reunion in the present Ian has succumbed to depression and Stella to alcoholism. Martin occupies transatlantic business seats, dislikes himself, and thinks nostalgically of the day he and Stella made love. A photo dating from that encounter is a running motif in the piece, a reminder of an event that seems "timeless".

The result is a subtle, ruefully humorous meditation on memory, change, disappointment and the vagaries of emotion. And, at the end, maybe more than that. Each actor stands and chants over a bank of candles, as if performing obscenities to his or her life. An outing that was just fun at the time is now "something to hold onto", a symbol of lost love, hope and togetherness. Yes, that's sad.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

## Marx for low humour

Some people laugh at the Marx Brothers just as some enjoy squid rissoles, and it is possible to pass decades of one's life avoiding both. But a permanent escape is never certain, so here I am reviewing the revival of a staged version of this 1931 talkie, soon to set off on a 12-venue tour that will climax next July at the Barbican.

Mayhem is already at work while the audience is filing into the Royal Exchange. Milton Yerolemos's Armand, butler to the formidable Mrs Rittenhouse, introduces guests hauled from our ranks and named as various visiting royalty, photographed by flashlamp and greeted by Mrs R herself (Jean Challice), a figure buttressed, not to say matted, and weighed down beneath ropes of pearls. Enter the famous Captain Spalding "from climates hot and scalding", the Groucho

role, to which Ben Keaton applies the well-known physical quirk, looking like Bugs Bunny with a cigar. The Chico chappie (Joseph Alessi) soon follows, and then the curly-haired dumb one (Toby Sedgwick), resembling Dr Who in a top hat. They tear around, snipping tail coats with shears, spitting water when pretending to be fountain (quite amusing), doing



Wishful thinking: Keith Macpherson's ineffective Ian and Paul Thomas Hickey as Martin in *Timeless* at the Donmar

silly things with all the things that come their silly way.

My tolerance for inanity being low I seldom laughed but admit I smiled from time to time. Co-directors Emil Wolk and Gregory Hersov take insufficient care with the sightlines when actors occupy the perimeter of the raised stage. In truth, there is too much sitting and standing around by characters waiting for the Marx nonsense to run its course. They look like ninnyes, putting up with jokes that might have been state-of-the-art when Hoover was President but have grown whiskers since.

The confident upper register in Sarah Redmond's singing voice is delightful. Yerolemos engagingly plays the fool. If I am otherwise unenthusiastic I am in a minority of 1 to 500. Next week the squid rissole.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## Blowing in the wind

There probably isn't a town in Britain that wears its heart on its sleeve with as much love as Sheffield. Two recent films have ironically given it as high a profile as the mine closures that first inspired them. *The Full Monty* has made millions out of unemployed strippers, and *Brassed Off*, though nowhere near as financially successful, has made a small pile out of a colliery brass band.

In Paul Allen's stage adaptation of Mark Herman's *Brassed Off* we are whisked back to the mining disputes sparked off by Michael Heseltine's pit closure programme in 1992. Through the eyes of eight-year-old Shane we are introduced to a community of hard-pressed miners who are mortgaged to the eyeballs; and on a crash course with the bailiffs once it is announced that Grimley pit will close. Cast aside like so much slag, they loaf about on Roger Glossop's gloomy set. While militant Rita sits on

dramatic purpose. In Deborah Paige's production harsh truths are nostalgically retailed, but it is pluck on show, not great drama.

But it is easy to forgive this excellent cast their flaky notes. The forest of brass in full cry, provided by various bands, is

a stirring, eye-moistening experience. Whether it melts hearts at the National Theatre when the company moves south later in the year remains to be seen.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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DECCA announces *Ernani* as the final operatic collaboration between Sutherland and Pavarotti. It is less forthcoming about the date of the recording, which at a reasonable guess was ten years ago.

Richard Bonyng is the vigorous conductor, delighting both in the rawness of early Verdi and in the Donizettian touches which lighten a sombre tale. The Welsh orchestra and chorus respond with great spirit witness the Act III finale by the tomb of Charlemagne. And there is Pavarotti as Ernani, outlaw and nobleman. He begins uncertainly then starts to relish the swagger and sheer bravura of the part. Act II has him firing on all guns, especially when the tenor's cabaleta comes along.

The other principals are patchy. Nucci snarls as the King of Spain but slithers uncomfortably around his noble Act III aria. Pava Burchuladze rarely sounds like an old man as Silva — more like Fafrer booming away in his cave. And Sutherland is unhappy as Elvira, who needs the opulence of a Freni or a Price. Stay with Muti and La Scala on EMI.

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THE provision of "new" concertos by the transcription of pre-existing ones was common practice in the 18th century, and in this second volume of J.S. Bach's harpischord concertos the Purcell Quartet offers four works that are all arrangements. BWV 1065 in A Minor is actually a transposed version of a Vivaldi concerto for four violins, and the four

harpischords on which it is played here have a special interest: they are all modern reconstructions of a Mietke instrument Bach was sent to collect from Berlin in 1719. There are no undue balance problems, even though the multiple keyboards are accompanied by only string quartet and double bass.

More discretion with the bass would have been welcome in BWV 1064 in C (originally for three violins), where muddy textures and heavy accents yield a gasping, lumpy, rustic quality. BWV1068 (better known as the A Minor Violin Concerto) and BWV 1063 are both neatly dispatched by Robert Woolley and the ensemble.

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THESE rarely performed choral pieces, recorded in the 75th birthday year of the composer Iannis Xenakis, form a fragmentary cultural biography of this sometime political prisoner, architect and radical maverick of the avant-garde.

The New London Chamber Choir, conducted by James Wood, rises fearlessly to the challenge of having larynx, lungs, tongue and lips stretched to the full by Xenakis's vocal experimentation. *Nuits*, written in 1967 while the composer was living in exile under the death sentence of Greece's military junta, is a work of true agon, of fierce contest, in which the unaccompanied voices wail and babble in sounds synthesized from Sumerian and ancient Persian sources.

In complete contrast, *A Colone*, based on Sophocles, attempts to recreate the speech patterns of the 5th century BC as trumpeters spike the female chorus and raw-voiced soloists with searing light. The instrumental ensemble, Critical Band, comes into its own in Xenakis's setting of the journey of the Argonauts from *Medea*. This challenging disc also includes *Knephas*, an angry lament commissioned in 1990, and *Serment*. Xenakis's vibrant setting of the Hippocratic oath.

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**Brassed Off**  
Sheffield Colliery

the picket line with her sandwiches and placard shouting: "The miners united will never be defeated," her husband Harry, shaped like a wrecking-ball with sideburns, spreads dissent among his mates. "You can't have a colliery band without a colliery," he reasons. Chuffing nonsense, argues Peter Armitage's band leader, Danny, an unforgiving stump of Yorkshire grit who intends to take them all the way to the Albert Hall with or without his dodgy lungs.

Between the dirty dealing pit owners (whom we never see), the squabbling wives and conniving hubbies, Herman hatches an improbable love story about a beautiful leggy office worker, Gloria, who comes to Grimley looking for her roots and finds James Thornton's Andy, Freya Copeland's Gloria plays a mean fiddlehorn but she also works for the other side, namely management. Will the band make it to the grand final before Danny croaks, and will Gloria be on board?

What is nice about Allen's adaptation is that it is fermented through the sharply observed characters rather than the plot. We see soft-centred hard men melting under intense heat. "What do you call a miner with a future?" asks Shaun Dooley's despairing Phil. "A bloody mirage." The pain of treacherously voting for inflated redundancy prompted by the crippling poverty at home is the all too real crisis of conscience. But despite being big on dramatic life, *Brassed Off* is low on

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**CHANGING TIMES**

Despite greater ecological awareness, Rachel Carson's fears for the welfare of the planet are still justified, says Bel Mooney

# A voice that cried out for the wilderness

Each generation has its visionaries — those with the gift of prophecy who may be doomed to mockery and disbelief. Such was not quite the fate of Rachel Carson, although she suffered her share of dismissive sexism, and is perhaps not known and honoured enough within the ranks of new-generation environmentalists.

Linda Lear's timely and definitive biography will certainly introduce a new readership to the magnificent achievement of *Silent Spring* — the work that did more than any previous book (and perhaps any book since) to waken the world to the damage done when short-sighted humanity deliberately pollutes the planet.

Born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1907, Rachel Carson learnt at her mother's knee a love of landscape and all its inhabitants, however tiny, that transcended mere enjoyment. They shared a Wordsworthian sense of nature as a moral force, before which there is no choice but to learn and be humble. Carson's early world was to be ruined by industrial pollution which nevertheless brought much-needed jobs, although the memory of smokestacks and ugliness would remain with her forever.

er, she was always aware that passion must be tempered by pragmatism.

Her first ambitions were literary, and all through her life she would craft sentences with an ear finely attuned to the poetry of language, even within scientific discourse. But a beloved and gifted science teacher at Pennsylvania College for Women was to change her life. By 1928 Carson was planning a career in science, and her early observation of nature had broadened into ecological consciousness.

Rachel Carson's efforts to become a marine biologist at a time when female scientists were not welcome within the academic community and her subsequent success as a government scientist in the Fish and Wildlife Service are fascinating in themselves. However, the real drive of Lear's narrative is in Carson's development of insights and ideas that were before their time. In 1936, for example, she wrote a densely researched

article which concluded that the decline in numbers of a certain fish was "probably the result of destructive methods of fishing, the pollution of waters by industrial and civic wastes..." She warned that if the shad were to survive, "regulations must be imposed which consider the welfare of the fish as well as that of the fishermen". Her life's work, which was to illuminate the effects of human intrusion on nature, while doing everything possible to instill a respect for its intricate possessions, had begun.

By 1945, chief breadwinner for a complicated and difficult family, yet longing to leave the government service, Carson knew that her future must lie in science writing for the lay audience, a means by which she could also express her

inner vision. In a moving passage from her first book, *Under The Sea Wind* (1941), Carson shows the lyrical influence of the 19th-century naturalist, and novelist Richard Jefferies: "To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of years, to see the running of old shad and young eels to the sea, to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be."

The runaway bestseller success of *The Sea Around Us* in 1951 testified to a craving in the American public (bored by growing fear of the arms race) for a larger dimension within which spirit and science could

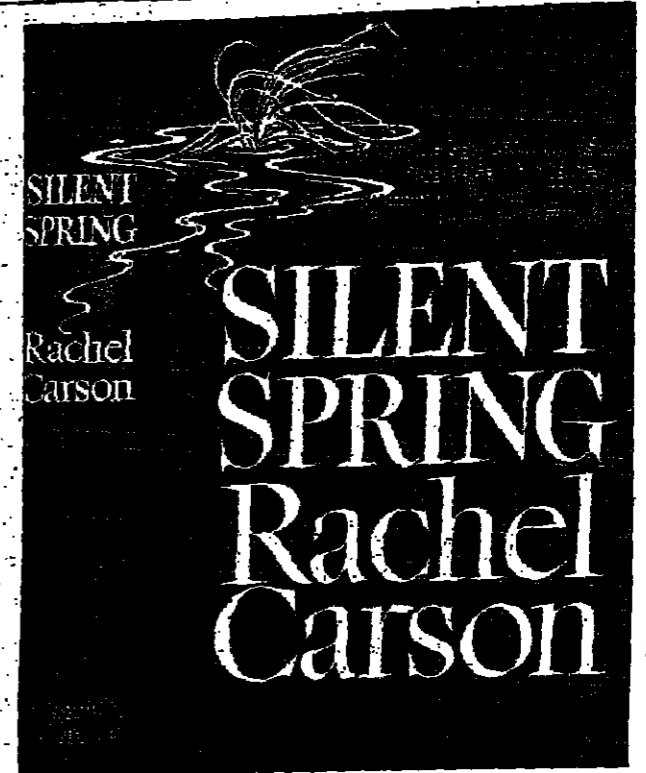
meet. Carson herself denied that her preoccupations were in any way escapist or unrealistic, pointing out that "the mysteries of living things, and the birth and death of continents and seas, are among the great realities". In public and in private she toiled to make people understand the interdependence of the physical environment and the life it sustains.

By the 1950s Rachel Carson was already aware of the terrifyingly irresponsible use of the pesticide DDT, which was being sprayed on fields and trees as part of the so-called "war on insects", with no knowledge of its long-term effects. She became involved with the Great Cranberry Scandal of 1959, when the bushes were drenched with a herbicide that turned out to be a carcinogen — and yet as Thanksgiving approached suspect fruits were shipped to market while politicians ate handbills in public to prove they were quite safe... Sound

vaguely familiar? The depressing thing about reading Lear's excellent biography is the knowledge that nothing much has changed. Rachel Carson was in the front line of a battle which is still on today, between those who regard mankind as humble custodians of the Earth, and those who think only of today's returns.

When *Silent Spring* was published in 1962, Carson was already being consumed by the cancer that would end her life at the age of 57. The Velsicol Corporation, a huge pesticide manufacturer, tried to stop publication of her book. Not so long afterwards they polluted the entire Mississippi River. Then the Monsanto Corporation, an industry leader in the development and manufacture of pesticides, responded to *Silent Spring* by distributing a mocking parody of Carson's warnings to every newspaper in the United States. This same Monsanto is currently at the heart of the controversy over genetically-modified soya. You have only to glance at the pages of *Farmers Weekly* to realise that the "war against insects" goes on indiscriminately — which is why the pesticide market in the United Kingdom was worth £1.3 billion in 1994.

In Britain and America, then as now, the land is in



Warning: a first edition cover of *Silent Spring* (1962)

thrill to the all-powerful agribusiness (and its political apologists) which capitalises on greed and ineptitude. Were she alive today, Rachel Carson would find much to make her rage, as well as weep. Two years ago, for example, Gra-

ham Harvey published *The Killing of the Countryside* (a book Carson would have been proud of), describing poisoned ditches, vanishing meadows and fields stripped of flowers, butterflies, animals and birds. *Silent Spring* indeed.



# Woof of approval

The *Tale of a Dog* is much more the tale of a bankruptcy judge who lives in Austin, Texas, than the mongrel whose brains he beats out. Although Gustafsson's novel is perfect in detail, many English-speaking readers will, I suspect, find a lightness in the American-ness of the narrator, Judge Erwin Caldwell, that wouldn't have troubled the readers of Gustafsson's original Swedish, although the translator Tom Geddes has done a superb job in making the text flow.

What Gustafsson offers us is essentially a tweaked campus novel which could have taken place pretty much anywhere. The choice of America, I imagine, has a lot to do with the character of de Rouwers, a Dutch philosopher who arrives in the States after the Second World War and tactfully enjoys a reputation as a fighter in the Resistance.

De Rouwers taught Caldwell ethics, and although Caldwell's bankruptcy work gets a look-in, it is Caldwell's

taste for philosophy and speculation that provides the bulk of the book.

De Rouwers, a highly respected idea jockey and an imaginative teacher, sends his ethics students out to interview slum landlords, turns out not to have been a self-effacing hero who traded lead across the canals with the SS units, but an enthusiastic crony of the Nazis.

The unmasking and suicide of Caldwell's former professor, along with Caldwell's summary execution of the yellow dog that had been overlord of rummaging in his dustbins, opens up the route to a discussion of good and evil, which ranges from the minutiae of a children's party to the Holocaust, cruelty (a tortoise also meets with a grim fate) and the usual ruminations on what the devil God is up to.

Despite the weighty investigations,

the book is an easy and often amusing read. Gustafsson uses his erudition more to entertain than to dazzle as he works his way from Genesis to Kojeve's lectures on Hegel. There is an especially memorable section on the Nazis' animal protection laws and the treatment of animals in Germany's past: "In 1795 there was a so-called hunt near Schwetzingen... wild boar sows were led out in a row along a walkway... a small cartilage had been hitched at the front to one of the strongest men in the village... and the strangest thing of all: along this walkway were 12 wooden figures of Jews and Jesuits who bowed every time the wild pigs walked over the boards." Of course, if Gustafsson is making this one up, then he merits full marks for imagination.

More reflective than dramatic. *The Tale of a Dog* also manages some elegant paragraphs about a pool-cleaning machine and some oddly poignant writing about the hollow-ness of much of contemporary life (American and elsewhere).

Gustafsson can also be very funny. Caldwell encounters the Most Intelligent Man in America, who, unknowingly, is busy duplicating the work of the 13th-century thinker Ramon Lull (this does read a little like customary European sniping at American ignorance of things unAmerican, but funny is funny) or in his creation of the science fiction writer (somewhat reminiscent of Vonnegut's Kilgore Trout), Anthony T. Winnicott. Sample title: *The Day the Last Human Being Has Died, the Whole Solar System Will Feel So Much Freer and Happier*.

Caldwell's not Caulfield, but *The Tale of a Dog* is the work of a master, albeit a master only in second gear.

**Tibor Fischer**  
**THE TALE OF A DOG**  
By Lars Gustafsson  
Harvill, £5.99  
ISBN 1 85196 286 0

POOR, friendless Arts Council. Humiliated by its failure to control the Covent Garden crazy gang, sidelined by a Culture Secretary itching to devise arts fiascos all by himself, cowed by the threat of emasculating curbs on its powers and personnel, it now finds itself lampooned at absurd length in Richard Witts' "alternative history", *Artist Unknown* (Little, Brown, £22.50, ISBN 0 316 08720 1).

# Portrait of the Council as a middle-aged flop

Witts is an odd-job man who has knocked around the arts world for decades to no earth-shaking effect, and his book says rather more about him than it does about the Arts Council. It's slick, juvenile, unfair, chippy, partisan, gossipy and often fantastically speculative. It projects the view that the Arts Council was (and is) shaped mainly by snobs, megalomaniacs, frauds, dolts, double-dealers and pederasts.

Its relentless homophobia is as extraordinary as its Byzantine conspiracy theories. Al-

most no major cultural figure of the last half-century emerges without being maddled by a scathing epithet, whether it is the "bitch fat pool" who ran Covent Garden in the Fifties, or the "irresponsible dilettante" who happened to be an outstanding director of the Edinburgh Festival, and the Proms. They all take their place in a saga which often reads less like a historical study than some weird sitcom concocted jointly by Machiavelli, Trollope and Joe Orton.

On the other hand, some of Witts' witterings are wickedly entertaining. And since the Arts Council disgracefully forked out £50,000 of taxpayers' money to sustain Andrew Sinclair in his task of writing a dull, safe "official" history of the institution (*Arts & Cultures*, 1995), it can hardly complain if independent spirits dig around for the dirt.

Witts certainly has a nose for a recurring theme: time and again he highlights some prehistoric public-arts debate that is still dripping on. Here is Beecham in 1951, for instance, complaining that the Government won't give tax breaks to

encourage arts patronage. And, only a decade later, here is the Arts Council fretting about how to establish a true "people's opera house" in London. *Plus ça change...*

But Witts' unflagging cynicism becomes wearying. He ascribes impure motives to practically every player in the Arts Council story, and that is unjust. There were, and still are, plenty of idealists in that organisation. They made mistakes, but also transformed cultural provision in Britain. In a country which accepts the notion of arts subsidy only grudgingly if at all, that is an achievement which deserves more recognition than this sparky but spiteful book is prepared to give.

**RICHARD MORRISON**

# Down but not under

Readers outside Australia are going to need a large input of local knowledge to get the best out of this collection of essays. For the adept (and this will be someone who has monitored the cultural and artistic controversies which rage in Australia like "wille-willes", the fierce desert winds of the outback), Salusinszky's choice will be fascinating.

But even such a person should be warned emphatically: this book is not a collection of essays by eminent Australians — instead it is a compilation of pieces on contentious Australian themes from writers blessed with degrees of skill ranging from the eloquent to the stammeringly polemical. *Essays* are four of generalised themes and there are many such here, but in most cases they are seen from an Australian point-of-view and backed up with particular Australian data. Charles McLaurin's meditations on death are admirably universal but modulate to consideration of the Australian Army in the First World War. Only Germaine Greer on *Sex and Society* and Robert Harris on the working life of undertakers do not need to emphasise local habitations and names.

The real course of newer or emergent countries is not their need to emancipate themselves from older civilisations but their misplaced loyalty to their less-than-accomplished

**Peter Porter**  
**THE OXFORD BOOK OF AUSTRALIAN ESSAYS**  
Edited by Imre Salusinszky  
OUP, £20  
ISBN 0 19 553739 4

founding fathers. Australian literature is forever looking for the point at which it can be seen to break from imitative modes and find its own voice. This moment is elusive and meanwhile some very boring work has to be considered and, if possible, esteemed. Thus Salusinszky includes pieces from colonial days which are of only historical or sociological interest. Instead, of some 15 or so essays written in the last century, only two seem worth reading — one by Samuel Hinder which gives a very up-to-date analysis of Australian attitudes; by *The Forfeiter* (1892), and another by Louise Lawson, mother of Henry Lawson, on *The Australian Bush Woman* (1899).

Essay also seems not quite the most just for many of these contributions. Review, article, spiel, harangue — might suit some of them better. The self-conscious shaping intention of the true essay-writer is not unknown in Australia and its most ardent practitioner, Walter Murdoch, whose elegant

feuilletons gave me much pleasure when I read them in my youth, is present with an essay on swearing.

However, Salusinszky mostly avoids belles lettres: he is deliberately anti-academic and emphasises the combative, not to say quarrelsome, side of the national psyche. His later pages are well spiced with arguments for and against multiculturalism, feminism, republicanism and other notable battlefields of the Australian body politic.

The prevailing tone is quirkily reactionary, though not necessarily right wing. A.A. Phillips's famous *Cultural Cringe* is in, together with a deploring of the imperialism of British television by Adrian Martin, but also included is David Stove's hymn to things British, *Crickit and Republicanism*. Expatriates and bitered, and Les Murray, in a deeply reflective essay on *Images of Australia*, owns up to inventing the neologism: "Anglo-Celtic". There is not much about writers and artists, though Peter Ryckmans's short study of the hermit painter Ian Fairweather is the best piece of writing in the collection. For all its peculiarities, Imre Salusinszky's *Oxford Book* catches the uncomfortable edginess of Australian disputation and offers a convincing picture of the Great South Land as it prepares to become a republic.

# Adjust your headset

**Scott Bradfield**  
**AMBUSH AT FORT BRAGG**  
By Tom Wolfe  
BBC Radio Collection, £9.99  
2hrs 55mins  
ISBN 0 563 55791 5

even directing a porn-video — all in the cause of justice and higher ratings.

After establishing his politically incorrect credentials long before they were fashionable, Wolfe feels secure enough now to lampoon just about the only special-interest groups in

America still considered fair game — reduce homophobic skinhead soldiers and self-inflated media gurus. And as usual in Wolfe, once the ball starts rolling, it's never very clear who's ambushing whom, but as in any war, the biggest casualty almost certainly turns out to be the truth.

*Ambush* is a fun, absorbing diversion for playing on car stereos and Walkmans and displays many of Wolfe's greatest gifts — his canny sense of the dense particularity of school culture, as well as the rhetorical lengths some men go to in order to convince themselves they're not losers. At the same time, though, *Ambush* feels unclosed and half-finished, and it's not too surprising to learn that it was excised from a much longer work in progress. In fact, the final scenes are so aimless and repetitive that had they arrived in page proofs, one may even have been tempted to skirt them.



Wolfe returns: from the bookshelf to the Walkman

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# She was the life of the Party

**I**t is 70 years since the Liberal prime minister Asquith died — and his party, effectively, died with him. But only last month the great Liberal voice could still be heard cutting cleanly through the air, when Helena Bonham Carter played the part of Lady Violet Bonham Carter — Asquith's daughter and Helena's own grandmother — in a play on Radio 4.

Now we have the second volume of Lady Violet's letters and diaries, as immaculately edited and annotated as the first volume was, and with an excellent introduction by John Grigg. It begins with the outbreak of the First World War, with her father the British PM, though soon to lose his job to Lloyd George, her friend Winston Churchill dreaming up his Dardanelles campaign against the Turks, and her friend Rupert Brooke telling her in a letter that to be on the Dardanelles expedition is "too wonderful for belief", as he imagines the Turks coming out "to meet them on the plains of Troy".

She is 27, an intelligent, impassioned, fiercely loyal young woman, at first sharing the excitement of what seems a noble war. She goes over to France to inspect the military hospitals and can still find it "thrilling", and laugh at the French peasant who tells her:

**Derwent May sees a Liberal stalwart disillusioned by war but hopeful for her cause**

"The Germans are cruel. They've killed a pig." Meaning back at home, life goes on, little changed. She introduces Churchill to Henry James with disastrous results — Churchill never listens to the end of a single one of James's long sentences, while James observes gravely afterwards that "meeting that young man has brought home to me very vividly the limitations by which men of genius purchase their ascendancy over mankind".

But as the deaths of the young men come in, feelings change in England, and Violet starts imagining "the grey, iced terror" the troops are going into. When Rupert Brooke dies in Greece before he has even set foot on a battlefield she writes in her diary: "It was like Spring being dead... Never to be able to dip into his mind — never to be able to look into his eyes again."

It is this intimate, deeply-felt entanglement with whole tracts of modern history that gives her diary both its force and its fascination. She marries Maurice ("Bongie") Bonham Carter, her father's private secretary, "with his love and dumb, solid, minding, strong presence" as she says when he is comforting her over Brooke's death, and she is soon caught up in the Liberal Party split. Lloyd George, who has supplanted her father, excites constant and undying rage. Yet she can also be witty and clever when there is a temporary reunion of the two Liberal factions. Making one of her famous speeches for her father in his Paisley constituency, where Lloyd George is also on the platform, she deftly comments on a remark in *The Times* that they look like the lion and the lamb: "I have watched them both very closely tonight, and I have never

seen Mr Lloyd George look less voracious, or my father look more uncatchable." Years later, she writes to the Greek scholar Gilbert Murray, a staunch Asquithian Liberal: "What bad luck you and I have had in being born at the same time as LLG." But that "bad luck" really symbolises the fate of most Liberals, whether with a large or a small "L". With all their large-sightedness and fair-mindedness, they are too often no match for their less disinterested opponents, and throughout the rest of this diary that is what you witness.

She draws vivid pictures of Ireland in the Troubles, portraying clearly the claims of both sides; she visits Germany when France and Belgium occupy the Ruhr in 1923 and sees the folly of that invasion (as well as noting, characteristically, that French and Belgians can get no service in Berlin hotels); she is on the side of Churchill again and against Chamberlain, whom she always calls "Ombrello" in pleading for rearmament in the 1930s. But her views, and those of her fellow-Liberals, cut less and less ice.

War comes again, and its anguish comes again. Her son Mark escapes to a prisoner-of-war camp in Italy, but her son-in-law "Bubbles" Ridley is killed in a similar attempt. As chairman, now, of the Liberal Party organisation, she is convinced that at the end of the war they must fight both Labour and the Tories — but *The Times* aptly comments that the party's liberal ideas are now espoused by both the other parties, so what have they got left to distinguish themselves?

She is still full of foresight. She sees the first ploughing up of the Wilshire downs and trembles for the future of the countryside. She notes the Russians' first arrest of three Poles and the future fate of Eastern Europe rises up before her eyes. But with the 1945 election, the Liberal Party is virtually eclipsed — and Churchill does not forgive the Liberals for standing against him. This book ends with a haunting vignette. Violet sees Clementine Churchill, Winston's wife and one of her own friends, at a Soviet Embassy party in November 1945 — and all she gets from her is "a rather guarded wave".

**CHAMPION REDOUBTABLE**  
The Diaries and Letters of Violet Bonham Carter, 1914-44  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25  
ISBN 0 297 86500 0



Toni Morrison: the Nobel prizewinner sacrifices plot and character to her examination of racial tension and integration

## No winner in this race

**L**ord, I hate a nasty woman." So speaks a male character in Toni Morrison's *Paradise* as he stokes a communal anger to a killing pitch on the eve of the multiple murder which is the centrepiece of this lumbering, disjointed novel. Morrison's first since she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994.

The tale, like the fresh bed of a big-hearted river, runs strong and straight through fact: in 1865, at the end of the American Civil War, many Southern slaves, suddenly free to exercise the privileges of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation because of the crushing defeat of the Confederacy, chose to migrate westward into Indian territory in an attempt to erase the memory of slavery from their history and forge new, admittedly Utopian, all-black communities based on tribal socialism.

This movement, embracing the fundamental tenets of America's pioneering spirit — that is to say, privatizing, stamming and self-interest in the name of Christianity — positioned freed blacks smack dab in the centre of the fray (Oklahoma, actually) between the white man and the red; between the whites' Manifest Destiny to westward hol and the Cherokees' right to merely exist. It is a fascinating and fertile trove of material for any storyteller, historical or otherwise. "Wagonloads and multitrains of freed blacks made their way from the bleached and ruined cotton fields of Mississippi and Georgia halfway across the continent to establish free-towns. And those towns needed bodies — strong ones. Advertisements for able bodied adults ran in Southern papers as late as the turn of the century. "Come prepared or not at all," was one such ominous appeal which Morrison quotes from the historical record in the opening chapter of *Paradise*. And, Morrison attests in recent inter-

views, like the mighty oak from the tiny you-know-what, from that one slogan grew this entire tale.

Set in the 1960s and 1970s, *Paradise* attempts to tell the story of the fictional all-black enclave of Ruby, Oklahoma, resettled after the Second World War over the dust of the first post-slavery community. *Paradise* is 90 miles from anything else, with the exception of an abandoned mansion 17 miles away, built as a safehouse for an embattled on the lam. It was later, SUBSEQUENTLY re-named the Convent by Roman Catholic nuns, now all dead, and it is occupied at the opening of

**Marianne Wiggins**

**PARADISE**

By Toni Morrison  
Chatto & Windus, £16.99  
ISBN 0 7011 6041 1

the novel in 1976 by a handful of the aforementioned shiftless "nasty women". Nine patriarchies plus some non-dynastic branches form the family tree bearing Ruby's entire population of 360 integrated souls, every one of them untrusting of the world in general, of whites on the whole and of any poor straggler passing through their inward-looking "paradise" in particular. "What sacrifices do you make every day to live here in God's bounty?" one of Ruby's ministers asks the captive faithful. "Television," he tells them. "Disco. Picture shows, filthy music. Wickedness in the streets, theft in the night, murder in the morning."

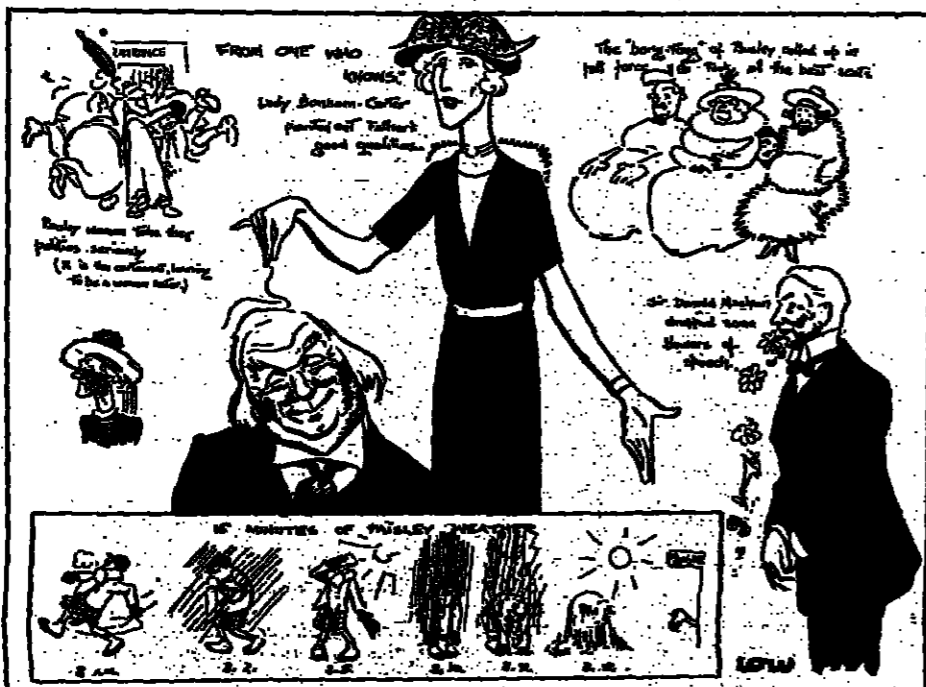
But murder in the morning is exactly where *Paradise* begins, in Morrison's first sentence: "They shoot the white girl first." Who "they" are, exactly, it takes a

while to learn. Morrison gloating, instead, over the gory details of the shooting. Who "the white girl" is we never learn for certain, because, through a heavy-handed linguistic trick, Morrison wants to drive home her oft-quoted dictum that: "Race is the least reliable information you can have about someone. It's real information, but it tells you next to nothing." (*Time* magazine, 19 January 1998.)

But, ultimately, race is what Morrison has based her magnificent career on — writing about race issues, race glories, the colour of the torn threads of race shot through America's fabric. To write about anything else would be to abandon her crown — and in *Paradise* we see evidence of both her yearning to do so and her sad failure in the process.

Trying to grapple with the artificially contrived offence to the community of Ruby that the "nasty women" at the Convent constitute, Morrison fails to draw a bead on any single target. No central protagonist emerges, no sympathy for any single character is stirred. Instead the focus changes with each chapter — even, near the end, when Morrison seems to run out of stamina, herself, the focus changes with each paragraph. Outside of race, there is nothing left to distinguish the inhabitants of Ruby in the reader's mind, and even though one of the assassins of the lazy, unemployed good-time girls squatting at the local Convent asserts that he hates a nasty woman, fiction loves one.

Why Morrison has chosen to cut the historical heart out of this story and set it in the disco years seems to me at best an insipid, and at worst a cowardly narrative choice, because we expect great writers to grapple publicly with devils — don't we? — not trivialise them. Regrettably, this is a *Paradise* without a serpent's tale.



Always a campaigner: David Low's cartoon of 1920 depicts Violet supporting her father, H. H. Asquith, in the by-election that returned him to Parliament

## Barry McGuigan cheers a champion, poet and playground hero

### Boxed up and ready to go

**T**here have been many books written on Muhammad Ali over the years and this one by Victor Bockris is another little cracker. Little being the operative word: it is only 128 pages long and it dwells extensively on Muhammad and the prophet and pedagogy. In many ways the book is sad, in that it reminds you what a super-articulate, warm, charismatic, one-off individual Muhammad was in the days when he could assemble and verbalise his thoughts.

Bockris spends time with Ali and his team of helpers as he prepares for the George Foreman fight in Zaire in 1974. It shows how instantly accessible Muhammad was — here is this white, young, long-haired college graduate allowed to spend quality time with the great man in the tranquil surroundings of Ali's training camp, aptly named "Fighter's Heaven".

Muhammad spends his time with Bockris, giving him one lecture after another and launching into his fight doggerel which was always amusing. But in this book there is more of Muhammad's serious poetry that I hadn't seen up to now, and it adds another element to this multi-faceted individual. His poems on freedom and truth are really exceptional. With verses like:

"Better far from all I see  
To die fighting to be free  
What more fitting end could be?  
Better than with cries and pleas  
Or in the clutch of some disease  
Or wasting slowly by degrees."

This last verse is sadly laden with irony, given Ali's tragic illness. The poem on freedom has ten verses and the one entitled *Truth* has seven. Many poets would be proud of either.

On the down side, I felt that Bockris could have used his time with Ali in a more constructive way. I felt he should have quizzed Ali more. Given a similar opportunity, great sports writers like Harry Mullian or Patrick Collins, could have done a more thorough investigation of this fascinating man. There is no doubt that Ali spent a lot of his time contradicting himself, which is particularly evident in the section entitled "Bluebirds Fly With Bluebirds". And I'm puzzled as to why an intelligent guy like Bockris didn't seize this opportunity to ask Ali some searching questions about this contradictory part of his nature.

The chapter entitled "Muhammad's Mountain" I found most interesting: it gives insight into how Ali handles and treats people and how he respects those people who are closest to him. From

**MUHAMMAD ALI IN FIGHTER'S HEAVEN**  
By Victor Bockris  
Hutchinson, £10  
ISBN 0 09 18095 8

Bundini Brown, Ali's corner man and garrulous motivator, to Angelo Dundee, his white trainer, to a black character named Blood, his second corner man, and Gene Kilroy, another white guy who looked after most of Muhammad's practical daily affairs: All were treated with mutual respect and understanding. They were a skilful team from whom Ali expected and got nothing but the best. But none were treated as subordinates. Muhammad Ali will be remembered

as probably the greatest heavyweight of all time with his inimitable style, lightning hand speed, fabulous, graceful movement around the ring and outstanding tactical boxing brain, not to mention his concrete chin. His fights with Joe Frazier and George Foreman will live on forever. He has done more for boxing than anyone in the history of the game. What's more, he will be remembered as one of the heroes of the 20th century and the most charismatic sportsman in living memory.

It is a crying shame that Muhammad Ali is a stumbling ruin of a man, wrecked with a combination of Parkinson's disease and pugilistic dementia. Victor Bockris gives us a compelling flashback to an unforgettable time in sporting history in the life of an irreplaceable individual.



Ali in 1974: the year he fought George Foreman in the "Rumble in the Jungle"

**WRITING** a satirical novel about journalism is always a risky business. The history of suppressed novels is littered with sad cases set in newspapers when it comes to upholding free speech concerning their own flaws, journalistic history of threatening libel. In addition, reviewers usually pan such fiction, largely on the ground that their own (unwritten) version will be so much better.

Both *Bilton* and *A Stranger in the Earth* are genuinely comic debuts in this minefield. *Bilton* will undoubtedly reap the lion's share of publicity, not least because it is about the machinery of PR itself.

The novel revolves around the friendship, and simmering rivalry, between the narrator, Adrian, and Bilton, an old-

**Amanda Craig**

**A STRANGER IN THE EARTH**  
By Marcel Theroux  
Phoenix House, £18.99  
ISBN 1 86159 075 X

**BILTON**  
By Andrew Martin  
Faber, £9.99  
ISBN 0 571 92750 0

fashioned Marxist. Both work on the *New Globe* doing lifestyle features. Adrian coxco's jaunty series called "Me and My Pen", while Bilton does the glum but equally vacuous "Downbeat". Like all stopped clocks, Bilton's hour comes when he throws a cup of coffee at the wet, marjorie Prime Minister — an act which catapults him into instant fame.

Bilton is acclaimed as "a square peg in a round hole..."

## Extra, extra: scoop these up to read all about it

a symbol of excitement for a fatigued and enervated society." He goes up, financially and socially. Then the PM declares war, and suddenly Bilton is a villain as patriotism sweeps the nation. Will he ever rise again?

Martin is brilliant on the fanuity of features journalism, the way it creates instant celebrities and builds bricks from straw. The moral and intellectual vacuum of the chattering classes is an excellent subject for satire, and Bilton is all too recognisable as its licensed jester.

The trouble is, by rendering Bilton so ridiculous, the author falls into the very class he is supposed to be savaging. Real satire is red in tooth and claw. It upsets people: it makes them think and feel: it is dangerous to read, let alone write. Martin, like his own hero, is likely to be lionised for a charming fable that is, essentially, a good career novel.

Marcel Theroux's debut has fewer jokes, but a promising interest in character and place: the humour does not obliterate a graceful comic style. His hero, Horace, is a trainee on a local newspaper, *Innocent and Intelligent*, he struggles to learn how to write journalism. "The King of Denmark was killed yesterday along with his nephew and heir in a tragic bloodbath" is his rendering of *Hamlet*. Then a

The plot is weak, and lacking in the craft that made William Boyd and Martin Amis instant stars. All those contemplating a career in print journalism should read these two novels, however, if only to realise that working on a provincial paper is a device for mopping up those without initiative, and that working on a national one is increasingly a device for promoting those without scruples.

Amanda Craig's novel, *A Vicious Circle*, is published by Fourth Estate, £6.99.

### THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

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**In Metro Books on Saturday: Is Chinese fiction going through its own cultural revolution? Plus the new John Grisham, Barbara Vine and Nicola Barker**

Bargains of the week: Tour the Dutch bulb fields, swim in the Gulf at Easter or ramble in northern Portugal



A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices:

BRITAIN

A TOUR of Edinburgh, a day trip to Perth and a Spirit of Scotland dinner are included in a four-day trip to Scotland's capital with Shaw's Coaches. It leaves from the Peterborough area on March 27 and costs from £169 with half-board. Details: 01778 342224.

EASTER in London might not be quite as romantic as Paris but will be available at a special rate of £59.75 a night from Superbreak for bed, breakfast and use of fitness facilities at the Radisson SAS Portman Hotel, provided you stay a minimum of two nights. Details: 0161-238 5257.

SEE the sun rise on Easter

Sunday at Stonehenge on a private visit to the stones with an expert guide from Days Out. The rarely available visit and B&B at a Salisbury guesthouse costs £50. Details: 01672 564075.

CYCLING and walking holidays in the Cotswolds over Easter are available at a 15 per cent discount from Compass Holidays. The £85 package includes two nights' B&B in Cheltenham. Information sheets and suggested itineraries. Details: 01242 250642.

ENJOY the Norfolk Broads without all that sailing this Easter by staying in floating log-cabin houseboats or riverside cottages with Norfolk Broads Direct. A cottage for three nights costs from £164 and a houseboat sleeping four for a week from £274. Details: 01603 782207.

JERSEY is available at a range of prices from Cadogan Holidays. Two nights' B&B in a guesthouse next month costs £124, including catamaran crossing from Poole, while a week at the five-star Longueville Manor will cost from £574 with the crossing. Return flights can also be arranged. Details: 01703 828307.

EUROPE

ALPINE resorts are celebrating fresh falls of snow and low temperatures, so hopes of late-season skiing are rising. Tony Dawe writes. Tour operators are offering special deals to lure back holidaymakers. Leisure Direction Ski has cut prices for Easter week in a catered chalet close to Val d'Isère to £349, including return travel by Eurostar. Motours is offering a week from April 4 and 11 in an apartment at Flaine from £175 a person, based on six sharing and including a six-day lift pass and Channel crossing by ferry or Le Shuttle.

If you can travel before Easter, Mark Warner has availability in Alpine resorts but its best deal with a £200 saving is a week's half-board from Sunday in St Anton, Austria, for £499, including return flights. Ski Esprit has a similar deal in Morzine in the French Alps from March 29 for £478. Details: Leisure, 0181-324 3030; Motours, 01892 518555; Warner, 0171-761 7000; Ski Esprit, 01252 616789.

FRENCH Golf Holidays is selling spring short breaks to northern France, cutting the

cost of two nights in a hotel 30 minutes from Calais, plus three days' golf at Harelod later this month to £150. Details: 01277 374374.

PORTUGAL's northern region, one of the least-known tourist areas within easy reach of Britain, can be discovered on an Easter ramble with Explore Worldwide. Fly from London to Oporto on April 3, follow the Douro River and visit Bragança and the Geres National Park on the 15-day trip, which costs £565 with B&B. Details: 01252 319448.

TULIPS in Amsterdam are included in a four-day Dutch bulb field coach trip at Easter with Leger. The £149 price includes pick-up from points in England and Wales on April 10, B&B and excursions. Details: 01709 839839.

EARLY MAY in the Mediterranean, when the summer programme is just starting, is ideal for bargains, and Tapestry Holidays is offering deals to new apartments and a hotel near Turunc Bay in Turkey. One week costs £249 and a fortnight £299, including flights from Gatwick or Manchester. Details: 0181-742 0065.



Easter on the slopes? Snow has arrived for late-season skiing

MARGARITAS in Mexico for £299 is not the cost of over-priced drinks but the deal for nine nights in a hotel of that name in Cancun, including return flights from Gatwick, if you fly tomorrow with Advantage Travel Centres. Details: 0870 9090070.

NEW ZEALAND return from £619, plus £30 worth of free wine, is enough to turn the world upside down, but book by the end of the month to take advantage of the Bridge the World offer. The Air New Zealand flights from Heathrow are available from April 16 to June 30 with wine vouchers from Threshers. Details: 0171-734 7447.

SWIM in the Gulf at Easter at Dubai's Jumeira Beach Hotel. Three nights with Elite Vacations cost £675, including return scheduled flights. Details: 0181-864 4431.

THE GREAT WALL, Forbidden City and Summer Palace are part of a four-night package to Beijing, available for £412 from Far East Travel Centre. Fly from Heathrow on any Tuesday until the end of

May (except April 7 and 14) and stay at the Huadu Hotel. Details: 0171-414 8808.

LAOS and a launch along the Mekong River are the intriguing extras on a ten-day Thailand Explorer trip with Bales Worldwide, starting from Heathrow on April 17. The river trip follows days in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. The price, including flights, B&B and sightseeing, is £795. Details: 01246 885991.

CAMPUS TRAVEL has a South Africa offer to suit those finishing exams in early summer. It has flights to Johannesburg from £329 for students and under-26s. Return any time within a year. Details: 0171-730 8111.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.

See The Times on Saturday for more flight bargains and late holidays

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Moin and Yousaf frustrate Zimbabwe

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MOIN KHAN and Yousaf Youhana batted together for three hours to see Pakistan to safety on the final day of the first Test in Bulawayo yesterday, denying Zimbabwe the second victory of their short time in Test cricket. Moin scored 97 and Yousaf his second half-century of the match as Pakistan reached 258 for six by the time that the captains, Rashid Latif and Alistair Campbell, agreed to call off the match with 73 overs remaining.

Pakistan, set 368 to win, never contemplated going for the runs and for some time it looked as though they would struggle to bat out the day. They lost both openers, Saad Anwar and Ali Naqvi, plus the nightwatchman, Mushtaq Ahmed, before lunch. When Inzamam-ul-Haq fell soon after the break, they were tottering at 80 for four.

Saeed was out in contentious manner, appearing to claim that he had been caught off a "bump ball". After a delay, he was given out by David Shepherd, the umpire.

However, on a true pitch, the determination of Yousaf and Moin, who put on 110 together, broke Zimbabwe's resolve. When Yousaf was out with 90 minutes left, missing a hook off Streak, Pakistan might still have lost, but they were then indebted to the experienced Ijaz Ahmed. He put on 58 with Moin, who was caught at short leg sweeping, going for the three runs that he needed for a fourth Test century. Campbell tried seven bowlers, the pick of them being Streak, who took three for 42 from 18 overs.

Zimbabwe's only Test win was over Pakistan in Harare three years ago. The second and final Test starts there on Saturday.

ZIMBABWE: First innings 321 (G W Flower 158 not out, H H Streak 52, Moin 97, Yousaf 90, Second innings 302 (G W Flower 100 not out, Moin 80, G J White 4-56).

PAKISTAN: First innings 258 (Moin 97, Yousaf 90, G J White 4-56).

Second innings: 37 (Moin 57, Yousaf 57, G J White 4-56).

37 (Moin 57, Yousaf 57, G J White 4-56).

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CRICKET: ENGLAND HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR OVER CONDITIONS FOR SIXTH TEST

Antigua pitch passes test

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN ST JOHN'S, ANTIGUA

A TRANSFORMATION has taken place. Where once was mud and a scene that resembled a builder's yard, there is now a rock-hard pitch of rolled grass and a lush, green outfield. The Recreation Ground here is ready to stage the sixth and final Test match of this series, which begins tomorrow.

When England were last here, in January, for a fortnight of preparation that was ruined by persistent rain, the place was a tip. Now, give or take the welding and drilling that appears to be an inevitable prelude to a Test in this part, everything seems to be in order. At the end of a series in which the standard of pitches has been widely explored, the signs are promising for this re-laid pitch and for a much improved ground. Two local teams, All Saints and Libertas, played a two-day game on it last week to assess its quality and the reports were good.

"Prof" Richard Edwards, the highly respected curator from Barbados, inspected the pitch last week and gave it the thumbs up. According to Steve Camacho, the chief executive of the West Indies Cricket Board, whose headquarters are in Antigua, it was "a routine inspection". He was happy with the level surface and was also satisfied with the job that the groundstaff were doing in preparing the pitch.

Leon Rodney, who chaired the committee responsible for the work, said: "The pitch is not express pace, but the bounce is consistent and that's a very good sign. I am satisfied it is going to be a tremendous pitch. The outfield is lovely and on the whole the Government should be very satisfied that this has been money well spent." The bill for all the work and materials is estimated at US \$7 million.

The outfield has been re-seeded with Bermuda grass, imported from Miami, and the importance of getting the ground ready in time, after the debacle of the abandoned first Test in Jamaica, has not been disguised. Lester Bird, the Prime Minister, and his colleagues have paid visits to see how the work has progressed and the local paper has delighted in paying tribute to everybody for "proving the nay-sayers wrong".

The new stands have helped to make the Recreation Ground a more suitable venue for international cricket. Spectators will be faced with the interesting sight tomorrow of trees, rooted in the pavement, spreading their branches through the concrete and steel rivets at the back of the terracing. By the time that all the tarmac has been laid and the place given a general dusting, it should be fine and dandy.



Butcher practises his catching as England begin their preparations for the match that starts tomorrow

An editorial in the local paper observed: "Our Recreation Ground has been transformed into a lovely facility, just in time for the big test. Of course, the work had to be done at breakneck speed because the planning was late and everything takes longer to do in Antigua than anywhere else on earth. This is a well-known, lovable and exasperating characteristic of an Antigua society."

Not everybody is quite so tolerant. An executive of one English county which stages Test cricket, who is here, believes that the International Cricket Council should take a

stronger line with boards that cannot keep their grounds up to scratch. "It keeps happening," he said. "At every ground in this series, work has been going on until the game has started."

The England players were also on "Antigua time" yesterday. After fielding practice in the morning they had the rest of the day to themselves, although Michael Atherton and Nasser Hussain batted in the nets against local bowlers. Having made a single half-century each in the series, they are certainly in need of it. The practice ground at the holiday resort where England are

staying was officially opened on Tuesday when a Prime Minister's XI, captained by Richie Richardson, played a Masters team that included Viv Richards.

The West Indies board hopes to develop this facility along the lines of a school of excellence for young cricketers

from all over the Caribbean. At last the authorities realise that with more and more youngsters attracted to American sports, and with their own team in decline, they must take vigorous steps to renew the game with which their people are most naturally associated.

Betting bedlam where going is loud to deafening

Alan Lee follows Cheltenham from a decidedly different vantage-point

FOR those who regard the Cheltenham Festival as one of life's unalterable devotions, Barbados in mid-March falls some way short of paradise. Pining for Prestbury, however, need not be total. A surprising solace exists through an unprepossessing doorway in backstreet Bridgetown.

Daily, tourists stare goggle-eyed through the entrance of Federal, the bookmaker. They may be well-fed cruise passengers in transit, or the beach-bronzed wandering off course, but the last thing that they expect to find within this Aladdin's cave is a bank of screens transmitting live horse racing from Plumpton or Kelso or, in the case of the past two days, headquarters itself.

Should they cross the threshold and risk the chaotic gloom beyond, there are further surprises in store, for even those inured to the variable charms of British betting shops will have seen nothing quite like this.

British racing has a far-flung fascination. Earlier this year, in a ramshackle area of Georgetown, Guyana, I discovered a similar establishment, packed to its rafters with animated punters. In Bridgetown, the operation is slicker. Some of the staff even wear uniforms.

It is not exactly plush — push-bikes are routinely wheeled into the shop and dress standards are decidedly lax — but no one feels threatened. A prominent British knight wandered in the other day to watch his horses run. The manager, a worldly figure named Zach, chuckles at the comparison with England. From his air-conditioned office, he gestured at the bedlam through a glass partition and said: "I've only seen one man in an English betting shop behave like these guys. And he was Jamaican."

Satellite television has allowed the regulars to indulge their fantasies and prejudices ever more vividly. Yesterday, in a corner of the main betting hall, a character with his hair in a coronet watched the entire Cheltenham programme sitting

astride a giant liner bin. As the horses turned to face the hill in each race, he rode them home, perched in the jockey's drive position, with his left hand showing the reins and his right hand flapping, fingers cracking like a whip. He belted above the din, sweating profusely.

Cheltenham, according to Zach, is a good draw. Federal's attendance yesterday was about 150 and most stayed all day. Of these, only three were women.

In the smallest and coolest of the three rooms, Bossy and Pine Boy were arguing, as usual. Both are greying, bespectacled, middle-aged Bojans who might be mistaken for solicitors, might even be solicitors. This, though, is their daily domain and they are John McCrickicks, debating and denouncing stridently.

Most wagers are modest. Most punters are not. For the Champion Hurdle on Tuesday, they gathered in scrums beneath the screens, shrieking, writhing and snapping their fingers until the commentary was drowned. It was, the wise Bossy pronounced afterwards a local victory. Barbados had its big annual race day a fortnight ago and 20,000 turned up. It was sponsored by Sandy Lane Hotel, which has just been bought by J.P. McManus, who owns Istabraq. Adopted glory.

Racing is a sporting passion here, second only to cricket. Bill Marshall, a septuagenarian Englishman, is champion trainer at the Savannah racecourse, which also acts as the exercise ground for the local horses. Form touts gather at dawn on the stables bend, bickering knowledgeably before taking themselves and their heated opinions down to Federal for the British action.

'This is their domain; they are its John McCrickicks'

The whole crowd will be there today for the Gold Cup, the winner of which has been confidently named by every regular all week. It's just that they do not agree, nor do they agree to differ quietly. I, meanwhile, shall miss seeing my own horse run at Cheltenham today, but it hardly matters. Bossy tells me he has no chance.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Apologies for mangling the West and South hands in yesterday's article, reprinted correctly here. I assure you that Helgemo would have noticed if he had had 16 cards.

Bridge hand diagram showing cards for South, West, North, and East. South: 15, 25, 35. West: Pass, Pass, All Pass. North: 2H, Pass, 3C. East: Pass, 3C. Contract: Three Spades by South. Lead: Five of clubs.

Defending Three Spades, Helgemo got off to a poor start when he led the five of clubs. With other layouts, that might have been the winning defence. Helgemo was marked with three clubs.

If declarer also had three diamonds (where superficially overlooking the queen of diamonds was necessary), he could not have more than one heart, and so could not use dummy's hearts provided East removed the entry. Certainly declarer could not have both ace and another heart and three diamonds and three clubs. So Helgemo overtook the queen of diamonds with the king, cashed the ace of clubs and played a spade. Now, declarer had to lose a club at the finish.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

- ABOMASUM a. An Australian native b. A tree sanctuary c. A cow's inside
- YPSILANTI a. Revolutionaries b. A grammatical form c. Small edible fish
- LINGEADJATI a. Nepalese dialect b. A Far Eastern treaty c. A large washing utensil
- PLANTAR CUSHION a. Part of a horse's hoof b. A party novelty c. A helicopter landing site

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Classic struggle

Beginners are often taught in chess that it is unwise to send the queen on early excursions to hunt pawns, whilst one's own army lags in development. However, with the rise in modern defensive techniques, such poisoned pawn variations, as they are known, have become an increasingly fertile battle ground for the clash of contemporary ideas.

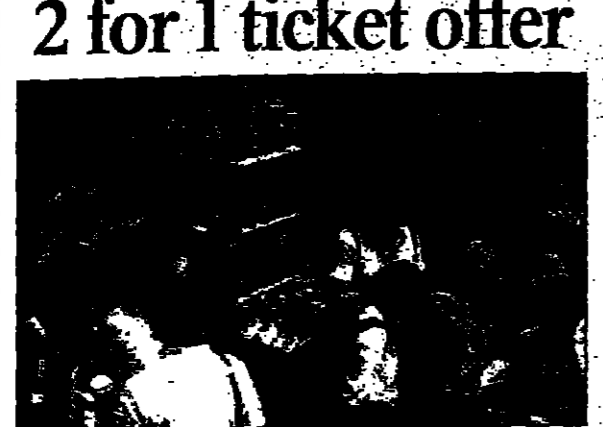
Chessboard diagram showing a position from the Sicilian Defence. Pieces are placed on the board according to the text. The diagram is labeled 'Diagram of final position'.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Schlein - Balashov, Moscow, 1998. Here, Black found a long forcing combination that eventually led to checkmate. Can you calculate the full sequence?

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES Your Health Show 2 for 1 ticket offer



Today The Times offers readers the chance to purchase one ticket at £7 for the Your Health Show at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London N1, between Friday April 3 and Sunday April 5, and receive another ticket free.

There will be two hundred stands at the show covering aspects of healthy living from the Alexander Technique to organic gardens, herbalism to laser surgery, soya foods to workout wear.

Talks by experts are free, you can try out the latest in fitness equipment, vitamins and bodycare products. Plus, with each ticket, you receive a book of vouchers worth £100 to spend at the show.

EXCLUSIVE TIMES GOODY BAG The first 1,250 readers who book will receive two goody bags containing: Folk Remedies for Common Ailments by Anne McIntyre, worth £8.50, a £5 voucher off £25 spent on the Revital stand and a £3 voucher off head massage and facial rejuvenation at the London Centre of Indian Champissage, which costs between £15-£20.

FOR TICKETS CALL 01923 840 048 CHANGING TIMES

Waugh defiant as Australia recover

By SIMON WILDE

STEVE WAUGH likes nothing more than a challenge and he got one yesterday. Australia, one down in the three-match series and opening for first use of a green pitch at Eden Gardens, Calcutta, collapsed to 29 for four in the second Test match and Waugh, charged with leading a recovery, developed severe cramp. Unperturbed as usual, he batted for four hours to guide his side to the relative riches of 233 all out.

Waugh was given excellent support by Ricky Ponting, who scored 60 in a fifth-wicket stand of 112, but was denied a fifteenth Test century by a cruel mix-up between Blewett, his runner, and Robertson. Blewett was beaten to the non-striker's end by Dravid's throw from the covers and Waugh was run out for 80.

At 178 for eight, Australia were spared further embarrassment by Robertson and Kasparov, staying together for nearly two hours to add 54. Robertson scored 29 and Kasparov a career-best 25.

Kumble, Ganguly and Srinath took three wickets apiece, Srinath producing a sensational start in front of a crowd that grew to 50,000 by dismissing Slater and Blewett with the fifth and sixth balls of the first over. Slater was caught at short leg and Blewett bowled by an inswinger that uprooted middle stump.

Mark Waugh prevented a hat-trick, but soon fell, padding up to Srinath in his fourth over. Slumped by the collapse and perhaps sensing his error in batting first with the ball swinging around, Mark Taylor, hung on 50 minutes for three runs before

edging a Ganguly outswinger to the wicketkeeper.

India will be confident of taking a first-innings lead and sealing the series with a match to spare, having comfortably won the first Test in Madras. Australia have not lost a Test series for four years and were last on the wrong end of a whitewash 15 years ago, when Kim Hughes's side lost all three Tests - in Pakistan.

As the conditions eased, Waugh and Ponting batted together for 2½ hours before Kumble broke through Ponting's defences with a terrific top-spinner. Kumble added the wickets of Healy and Warner within the space of 27 balls and was also bowling when Waugh was run out.

Confronted with a grassy

pitch, Australia abandoned plans to play a third spinner and gave Paul Wilson his first Test cap. India left out Harvinder Singh, a seamer, and included an extra batsman, Venkat Laxman, who was not even in the original 12.

Slater, whose failure was his third of the series, is among seven members of Australia's tour party overlooked for one-day tournaments in India and Sharjah next month. Bevan, Kasparov, Lehmann and Moody are selected, meaning that they will be 11 days late for the English season.

AUSTRALIA ONE-DAY SQUAD: S R Waugh (captain), M G Bevan, D W Fleming, A T Clewley, M S Kasparov, T S Lavin, D R Murray, T M Moody, R T Ponting, G R Robertson, S K Williams, M E Waugh, P Wilson.

# Irish can complete memorable three days by taking greatest prize Dorans Pride to join Festival mood

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

HISTORY does not relate if William Shakespeare was a punter, but this week the Irish could be forgiven for thinking he had them in mind when writing *Julius Caesar*. "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

The fortune of the Irish stems from the economic misfortune of the English in the early 1990s when recession ended the annual raids on their bloodstock — combined with an economic prosperity in their own country which offered sufficient encouragement to keep their best horses.

The embryonic talent of a few years ago has reached maturity this week, and with it the dreams of every Irishman as a green tide has washed over Cheltenham, French Balerina, the magnificent Istabraq, Florida Pearl and Alexander Banquet, plus some near misses, have underlined the trend — and the best may be reserved for this afternoon.

On paper, this year's Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup is not a vintage renewal and, while it is tempting fate, I believe only a handful of runners have a serious chance of winning chasing's greatest prize.

Despite approaching the veteran stage, Rough Quest

has relatively few miles on the clock and he has been primed by Terry Casey to return to his best today. Runner-up to Imperial Call two years ago before landing the Grand National, the 12-year-old has been slightly below form after a promising reappearance behind The Grey Monk at



Haydock — but there have been genuine excuses. He tweaked his back and off his food before finishing third to See More Business in the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day. Casey then blamed himself for giving Rough Quest insufficient work before he once again finished

third to See More Business in the Pillar Chase at Cheltenham. However, this spring horse has shown Casey he is buzzing and he offers some each-way value.

The credentials of See More Business, from the in-form Paul Nicholls yard, speak for themselves and there is every reason to believe further improvement is in the pipeline. Although his jumping has become more fluent there is still room for improvement and he cannot afford the kind of error which he made four fences from home at Cheltenham last time. Of more concern is the drying ground, as his best form has been produced in softer going.

Conditions unfort were in his favour on the two occasions See More Business clashed with Dorans Pride last season — and he had no answer to Ireland's top chaser. While the connections of See More Business would argue rightly he has improved over the past year, two pieces of form suggest Dorans Pride has not stood still — and could be up to 6lb superior to Britain's leading hope.

His defeat of Jeffell and Merry Gale over an inadequate run in December was a fine performance and at Leopardstown last month he showed arguably his best form when winning a fast-run Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup — with Go Ballistic fourth. Sandwiched between those two victories was a dismal effort on heavy ground which continues to mystify his connections.

However, since coming good two days before the Hennessy he has been delighting Michael Hourigan, his trainer, and the confidence in Dorans Pride matches that before his Stayers' Hurdle victory three years ago.

Cyborgo split See More Business and Rough Quest last time but this confirmed mudlark may lack the speed to keep tabs on the leaders. However, his stablemate, the enigmatic Challenger Du Luc, could run into a place on a course where he invariably goes well.

If Suny Bay was in the form which saw him win the Hennessy at Newbury in November, he would be a serious challenger but his preparation has not pleased Charlie Brooks, whose yard is only just beginning to emerge from the doldrums.

Of the outsiders, Simply Dashing appeals. If an operation to help his breathing encourages him to recapture the form of his wins at Ascot and Wetherby in the autumn, he could sneak a place.



Dorans Pride carries Irish hopes in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup this afternoon

## Dangers abound along pathway to championship

Richard Dunwoody believes the Gold Cup is much more than a two-horse race

It has been my good fortune to have several attractive rides in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup. They have only yielded one winner, Charter Party ten years ago, and it's ironic that he was among the outsiders. This time I'm hoping the bookmakers have it right in assessing Dorans Pride, my mount today, among the favourites.

It's hard to define exactly what is required of a Gold Cup winner. The race is always intensely competitive, as you'd expect, and I always attach a high priority to proven form over the course. They really reach for their fences, so it's an advantage to know that your mount can handle that situation.

Most of you will remember that Dorans Pride finished third in the race last year when ridden by Shane

later wished I'd pulled him up; I nearly put the horse on the floor.

Fortunately, I had the chance to put matters right at Leopardstown in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup last month. It took some time for Dorans Pride to warm up, but he got it together at half-way. I was able to ride him as I wanted in the second half of the race. He got better and better, and the experience should have bolstered his confidence.

Dorans Pride is an intelligent horse. He remembered that had experience at Naas, so I'm relieved that he came through it last time. All the same, my priority today will be to build his confidence — the first circuit. I'll be looking for him to establish a good rhythm so that he's enjoying himself. I'll give him plenty of daylight at his fences. I'll have to start asking him soon after half-way and it's reassuring to know that this horse has done it before at the Cheltenham Festival. I know what he's capable of — and so does he.



Dunwoody: hopeful

See More Business looks the toughest of Dorans Pride's rivals. My horse has seen See More Business on both their meetings last season, when I rode Dorans Pride on the first occasion and See More Business on the second. The way Dorans Pride won their second meeting was very impressive, but See More Business has certainly improved since then. He has set the standard this year.

Although the Gold Cup is often portrayed as a match between two horses, it hardly ever works out that way. It's too cut-throat, too competitive, and the others are not there to make up the numbers. There is probably more to come from Cyborgo, although he would be more effective on softer ground. Suny Bay has not had an ideal preparation, but three years ago, when Dorans Pride really came of age.

Once again, however, I find myself casting eyes over my opponents and feeling that I wouldn't swap my ride for any other. If only it were that simple; if only Dorans Pride could do what so many people expect and carry me to victory. Thrilled as I am to have landed the race before, nothing could match winning aboard a horse on which the whole of Ireland is counting.

### BIG-RACE LINE-UP

3.15 TOTE CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP CHASE		C4	
(Grade 1; £148,962; 3m 21 1/2yd) (17 runners)			
301	1212-56 ADDINGTON BOY 5 (C.F.F.S.) (6th Feds) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Hunting 130
302	11-2286 BARTON BANK 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Magnus 170
303	2222-24 CHALLENGER DU LUC 19 (B.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	6	Made 151
304	4-0111P COOL DAWN 40 (B.F.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Thomas 165
305	2814-P COULDT BE BETTER 33 (C.F.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Gallagher 150
306	1101-P CYBORG 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	McGee 168
307	1-1151 DORANS PRIDE 38 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Dawson 150
308	35-0411 GO BALLISTIC 21 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	O'Dwyer 154
309	120-265 INDIAN TRACKER 54 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lover 140
310	123-233 ROUGH QUEST 47 (C.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Ridgway 157
311	21-3111 SEE MORE BUSINESS 47 (C.F.S.) (6th P. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	T. Murphy 165
312	22-1233 SENIOR E. BETRUTTI 28 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lowe 161
313	12-1164 SIMPLY DASHING 34 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Wyer 173
314	111-223 STRATH ROYAL 74 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	M. Brennan 158
315	122-222 STONG PROMISE 21 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	W. Williams 170
316	512-114 SUNY BAY 33 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	G. Bradley 165
317	02-1114 YORKSHIRE GALE 41 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	L. Apoll 159

### CHELTENHAM

THUNDERER	
2.00 The French Fur	3.55 Farnus
2.35 Comanche Coat	4.30 Flying Instructor
3.15 ADDINGTON BOY (nap)	5.05 Jack Doyle
	5.40 Bahamian Knight

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.15 SUNY BAY.  
Carl Evans: 3.55 Earthmover.

### GOING GOOD TOTE JACKPOT MEETINGS SIS

2.00 ELITE RACING CLUB THURSDAY HURDLE		C4	
(Grade 1; £25,450; 2m 10yd) (26 runners)			
521	11-1111 BUDY MARVEL 19 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Farnes 108
522	11-1111 CITY HALL 40 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	R. Thomas 141
523	11-1111 DORANS PRIDE 38 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	M. Brennan 158
524	11-1111 INDIAN TRACKER 54 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lover 140
525	11-1111 ROUGH QUEST 47 (B.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Ridgway 157
526	11-1111 SEE MORE BUSINESS 47 (B.F.S.) (6th P. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	T. Murphy 165
527	11-1111 SENIOR E. BETRUTTI 28 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lowe 161
528	11-1111 SIMPLY DASHING 34 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Wyer 173
529	11-1111 STRATH ROYAL 74 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	M. Brennan 158
530	11-1111 STONG PROMISE 21 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	W. Williams 170
531	11-1111 SUNY BAY 33 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	G. Bradley 165
532	11-1111 YORKSHIRE GALE 41 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	L. Apoll 159

### FORM FOCUS

Buddy Marvel beat Road Race in 6-runner hurdle race at Kempton (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. City Hall beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Dorans Pride beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Indian Tracker beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Rough Quest beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. See More Business beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Senior E. Bettrutti beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Simply Dashing beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Strath Royal beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Stong Promise beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Suny Bay beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Yorkshire Gale beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday.

### 2.35 SPANISH STAYERS HURDLE

2.35 SPANISH STAYERS HURDLE		C4	
(Grade 1; £27,137; 3m 110yd) (9 runners)			
101	11-1111 ADDINGTON BOY 5 (C.F.F.S.) (6th Feds) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Magnus 170
102	11-1111 BARTON BANK 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Magnus 170
103	11-1111 CHALLENGER DU LUC 19 (B.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	6	Made 151
104	11-1111 COOL DAWN 40 (B.F.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Thomas 165
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### FORM

Cheltenham Boy beat Grand (4m 10yd) on Tuesday. Addington Boy beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Barton Bank beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Challenger Du Luc beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Cool Dawn beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Coult Be Better beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Cyborg beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Dorans Pride beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Go Ballistic beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Indian Tracker beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Rough Quest beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. See More Business beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Senior E. Bettrutti beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Simply Dashing beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Strath Royal beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Stong Promise beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Suny Bay beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Yorkshire Gale beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday.

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406	1101-P CYBORG 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	McGee 168
407	1-1151 DORANS PRIDE 38 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Dawson 150
408	35-0411 GO BALLISTIC 21 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	O'Dwyer 154
409	120-265 INDIAN TRACKER 54 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lover 140
410	123-233 ROUGH QUEST 47 (C.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Ridgway 157
411	21-3111 SEE MORE BUSINESS 47 (C.F.S.) (6th P. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	T. Murphy 165
412	22-1233 SENIOR E. BETRUTTI 28 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lowe 161
413	12-1164 SIMPLY DASHING 34 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Wyer 173
414	111-223 STRATH ROYAL 74 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	M. Brennan 158
415	122-222 STONG PROMISE 21 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	W. Williams 170
416	512-114 SUNY BAY 33 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	G. Bradley 165
417	02-1114 YORKSHIRE GALE 41 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	L. Apoll 159

### 3.55 CHRISTIES FOXHUNTERS CHASE

3.55 CHRISTIES FOXHUNTERS CHASE		C4	
(Amateurs; £18,958; 3m 21 1/2yd) (11 runners)			
481	1212-56 ADDINGTON BOY 5 (C.F.F.S.) (6th Feds) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Hunting 130
482	11-2286 BARTON BANK 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Magnus 170
483	2222-24 CHALLENGER DU LUC 19 (B.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	6	Made 151
484	4-0111P COOL DAWN 40 (B.F.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Thomas 165
485	2814-P COULDT BE BETTER 33 (C.F.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Gallagher 150
486	1101-P CYBORG 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	McGee 168
487	1-1151 DORANS PRIDE 38 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Dawson 150
488	35-0411 GO BALLISTIC 21 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	O'Dwyer 154
489	120-265 INDIAN TRACKER 54 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lover 140
490	123-233 ROUGH QUEST 47 (C.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Ridgway 157
491	21-3111 SEE MORE BUSINESS 47 (C.F.S.) (6th P. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	T. Murphy 165
492	22-1233 SENIOR E. BETRUTTI 28 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lowe 161
493	12-1164 SIMPLY DASHING 34 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Wyer 173
494	111-223 STRATH ROYAL 74 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	M. Brennan 158
495	122-222 STONG PROMISE 21 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	W. Williams 170
496	512-114 SUNY BAY 33 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	G. Bradley 165
497	02-1114 YORKSHIRE GALE 41 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	L. Apoll 159

### FORM FOCUS

Addington Boy beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Barton Bank beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Challenger Du Luc beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Cool Dawn beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Coult Be Better beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Cyborg beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Dorans Pride beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Go Ballistic beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Indian Tracker beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Rough Quest beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. See More Business beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Senior E. Bettrutti beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Simply Dashing beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Strath Royal beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Stong Promise beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Suny Bay beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday. Yorkshire Gale beat Sandown (2m 10yd) on Tuesday.

### 4.30 THE CHELTENHAM GRAND ANNUAL CHASE

4.30 THE CHELTENHAM GRAND ANNUAL CHASE		C4	
(Handicap; £23,812; 2m 110yd) (13 runners)			
501	1212-56 ADDINGTON BOY 5 (C.F.F.S.) (6th Feds) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Hunting 130
502	11-2286 BARTON BANK 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Magnus 170
503	2222-24 CHALLENGER DU LUC 19 (B.F.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	6	Made 151
504	4-0111P COOL DAWN 40 (B.F.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Thomas 165
505	2814-P COULDT BE BETTER 33 (C.F.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Gallagher 150
506	1101-P CYBORG 47 (C.F.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	McGee 168
507	1-1151 DORANS PRIDE 38 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	8	Dawson 150
508	35-0411 GO BALLISTIC 21 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	O'Dwyer 154
509	120-265 INDIAN TRACKER 54 (B.F.S.) (6th J. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lover 140
510	123-233 ROUGH QUEST 47 (C.F.S.) (6th W. Nicholls) (6) P. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Ridgway 157
511	21-3111 SEE MORE BUSINESS 47 (C.F.S.) (6th P. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	T. Murphy 165
512	22-1233 SENIOR E. BETRUTTI 28 (B.F.S.) (6th M. D. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Lowe 161
513	12-1164 SIMPLY DASHING 34 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	Wyer 173
514	111-223 STRATH ROYAL 74 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	M. Brennan 158
515	122-222 STONG PROMISE 21 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	W. Williams 170
516	512-114 SUNY BAY 33 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	G. Bradley 165
517	02-1114 YORKSHIRE GALE 41 (B.F.S.) (6th S. Nicholls) (6) R. Nicholls 10-12-0	4	L. Apoll 159

### FORM FOCUS

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# I am not a number, I am a free woman

Were there such a thing as a Fathers' Union, it would be all that different from what Mary Sumner, a bishop's wife, had in mind when she founded the Mothers' Union a century ago with the aim of upholding the sanctity of marriage and family life — apart, obviously, from the fact that meetings would be in the form of "pub evenings" rather than "coffee mornings"; there would be more golf tournaments and members would show respect to their wives in all manner of ways, in particular by not inviting them to the annual Christmas lap-dancing evening (all proceeds to worthy Christian causes).

The Mothers' Union, as we learnt in last night's *The Godmothers*, Lorraine Charker's affectionate and only mildly teasing film for Modern Times (BBC2), is a rather more high-minded and rigorous affair, starting from the

infinitesimal ceremony onwards. "Do you wish to be admitted as a member of the Mothers' Union?" I do.

"Will you try to plan your life to include worship in church, prayer and bible-reading?" I will, by the grace of God.

"I admit you as a member of the Mothers' Union in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Who are you?

"I am Mother Number Two."

Who is Mother Number One?

"You are Mother Number 6047. I am not a number, I am a free woman!"

The surprise is that only the last bit of this exchange was made up. You see, the Mothers' Union takes itself seriously, it probably has a million members around the world (average age, 55), who not only do good works — like raising funds to buy a cow for a Ugandan

village — but also worry about "contemporary issues", such as drugs, and wonder what they might do about them.

At the York Union's Action and Outreach meeting, for example, the chairwoman announced: "Now 60 per cent of younger women work, and that's a great challenge to the Mothers' Union. We all have to collect our thoughts on this issue. It's really about lesbian membership of the Mothers' Union, and that's not a subject that appeals to most of us." There is a prize, by the way, for guessing the link between young women workers and lesbians. From the floor, arose an unexpected voice: "I think it would be a mistake to have any rules and regulations about it at all. We're not just talking about lesbians, are we, because I can see that a pair of homosexual males might be attracted to the Mothers' Union —



Joe Joseph

rather more so than lesbians." It's an observation that is borne out by Julian's audiences, which are now largely female and which share his broad view that heterosexual males are generally the cause of most of the grief and vulgarity in the world. Just think of the funds you could raise selling tickets to his initiation ceremony.

Clary was the subject of last night's *First On Four*, Channel 4's

celebration of comics who got a leg-up from Jeremy Isaacs and Michael Grade, Channel 4's first two bosses. Clary actually began his stage career with Fanny the Wonderdog in a modest double-act called "The Joan Collins Fan Club", though even his earliest make-do stage costumes made Liberate look dowdy.

It was Fanny, according to Clary's one-time writer, Paul Merton, who "was the one with the talent and Julian was very much the passenger. People thought that Fanny was going on to huge, worldwide domination. But for the fact that Julian had been drugging her food, she would have done."

But having abandoned Fanny, Clary proceeded to build a sturdy career on double-entendres. He even puts innuendo into the word "innuendo". He has only stumbled badly once, when his normally sane sense of how far he can push an audience deserted him. That

was at the British Comedy Awards in 1992, when he made his infamous *Norman Lamont* joke. It was certainly unimpressive, but probably not as unpleasant as many of the jokes Norman Lamont played on the economy when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Even without Lamont, the economy doesn't always flourish. It's amazing how many people dream of running their own business, especially when high on narcotics, but even booming businesses can suddenly go bust. Last night's *Trouble At The Top* (BBC2) was a fascinating and disheartening portrait of the financial and human fallout from a business that has hit the skids. The cameras followed the mop-up operation of a receiver sent to Pilgrims Foods, one of Britain's longest-running frozen food firms: it had gone bankrupt with outstanding bank debts of £600,000.

The receiver, Lee Manning, told us on his way to Pilgrims's headquarters in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, that "People think that receivers are ambulance chasers, vultures making money out of the misfortunes of others. But we're there to do a job... it's the real world." And in that real world, the bank wants its £600,000 back, either by selling Pilgrims, or by closing it down and hawking the assets. Manning does manage to find a buyer, for £508,000, but not before Pilgrims's remaining stocks have fallen so low that the ladies taking orders have almost nothing to offer their regular customers.

"No," one distressed employee tells a caller, "the only bread we've got is the mini-French, that's the *petit pain*" — only she pronounced it "petty painne". Maybe it was a Freudian slip. Two days later it had turned into a "grand painne", the woman, along with 12 colleagues, lost her job.

BBC1
6.00am Business Breakfast (65258)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (65432)
9.00 Style Challenge (5485141)
9.25 All Over the Shop (7842726)
9.50 Kilroy (1) (8355890)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (4578187)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (1) (6621109)
11.35 Real Rooms: A dark, angular attic is transformed (1083329)
12.00 News (7) and weather (8496529)
12.05pm Call My Bluff With Lesley Garrett, Rebecca Lacey, Lynda Bellingham and Pete McCarthy (5974884)
12.35 Wipeout (2816068)
1.00 One O'Clock News (1) and weather (75819)
1.30 Regional News (1) (5458068)
1.40 The Weather Show (6885767)
1.45 Neighbours (1) (72829638)
2.10 Lions (1) (837857)
2.30 Inside Country Amos the tortoise is escorted to the vet (8068)
3.30 Playdays (7803600) 3.50 The Littlest Pat Show (5110957) 4.00 McGee and Me (1788242) 4.20 Julie, Jekyll and Harriet Hyde (1077884) 4.35 The Mask (5718887) 5.00 Newsround (1) (9834426) 5.10 Orange Hill (1) (7818447)
5.35 Neighbours (1) (1111073)
6.00 Six O'Clock News (7) and weather (835)
6.30 Regional News (1) (937)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson (1) (8277)
7.30 Eastenders Kathy and Phil terminate their marriage (1) (871)
8.00 Hospital News: Libby, the Liberal Democrat spokesman Malcolm Bruce and the journalist Hilary Wainwright debate issues raised by the Budget. Chaired by David Dimbleby (1) (93616)
8.30 2point4 Children: The whole family become addicted to a new chocolate bar (1) (4432)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News (1) and weather (8426)
9.30 Budget Response by the Liberal Democrats (1) (262155)
9.35 Silent Witness: New series of the crime drama, starring Amanda Burton. Pathologist Sam Ryan needs help from an old tutor solving the violent and mysterious death of a friend (1/2) (1) (834364)
10.25 The Mrs Merton Show: Strutty spoof chat show (1) (825180)
10.55 Question Time: Alastair Darling, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Shadow Chancellor, Lord Alton of Liverpool, Liberal Democrat spokesman Malcolm Bruce and the journalist Hilary Wainwright debate issues raised by the Budget. Chaired by David Dimbleby (1) (93616)
11.25 Shades of Grey (1992) Thriller, starring Valerie Bertinelli as a Harvard law graduate who embarks on a career in the law herself dealing with a serious case of corruption in the city's police force. George Dzundza also stars. Directed by Kevin J. Dobson (56835)
1.30am News (2510759)
1.35 BBC News 24

BBC2
6.10am A Winter Sleep (3436242) 6.35 Breathing Deeply (1587345) 7.00 See Her News (1) (782906)
7.15 Teletubbies (1) (5802797) 7.40 Captain Coward (1) (6459771) 8.00 Blue Pals (1) (1) (89451) 8.30 Bum (882277) 8.45 The Record (8061277)
9.10 Hello aus Berlin (7218123) 9.25 Megamaths (7044797) 9.45 Come Outside (9745529) 10.00 Teletubbies (1) (44451) 10.30 Storytime (9240631) 10.45 The Experiment (8047159) 11.05 Space (868432) 11.15 Zig Zag (1) (7121108) 11.35 English File (1078781) 11.55 Litschthy (5088835) 12.30pm Working Lunch (18451)
1.00 The Family Nest (1) (2454867) 1.05 Toady Fairies (1) (2454868) 1.10 The Leisure Hour (7370155) 2.10 Make or Break (22889180) 2.40 News (1) 2.45 Westminster (4150548) 3.25 News (1) 3.30 How Does Your Garden Grow? (203)
4.00 Change Ties (1) (4745567) 4.35 Ready, Steady, Cook (4842426) 4.55 Esther: Woman in the Arms Forces (8815548) 5.30 Today's the Day (384)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Kiria receives death threats against her former resistance group (1) (563384)
6.45 HR, Miss or Maybe (804819)
7.00 Third Rock from the Sun: Dick comes to terms with human mortality (1) (4819)
7.30 Regional Programmes (513)
8.00 Local Heroes: Concluding the two-part Science Week special, Adam Hart-Davis explores the stamping grounds of scientists in the ancient world (1) (9587) WALES: Welsh Herald
8.30 Top Gear: Vauxhall's new Astra (1) (8074) 9.00 Supersize: The new cast registers cause confusion (1) (8088)
9.30 Silent Witness: New series of the crime drama, starring Amanda Burton. Pathologist Sam Ryan needs help from an old tutor solving the violent and mysterious death of a friend (1/2) (1) (834364)
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1.30am News (2510759)
1.35 BBC News 24

HITV
6.00am GMTV (4671074)
9.25 Supermarket Sweep (1) (7354266)
9.55 Regional News (734971)
10.00 The Time, The Place (1) (48277)
10.30 This Morning (1) (4148388)
12.20pm Regional News (821525)
12.30 News (1) and weather (2908093)
12.55 Shortland Street (2810884)
1.25 Home and Away (1) (9438258) 1.50 Crossroads (7272271) 2.20 The Chef (8400513) 2.50 Vanessa (1) (8582819) 3.20 News (1) (1514074) 3.25 Regional News (1513545)
3.30 Potamus Park (833613) 3.40 Wizardora (870141) 3.50 The Forgotten Toys (851578) 4.05 The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries (1) (7522172) 4.15 Mike and Angelo (1) (1854093) 4.35 Cartoon Time (892258) 4.45 Reboot (5732567)
5.10 A Country Practice (2774906)
5.40 News (1) and weather (11010)
6.00 Home and Away (1) (438600)
6.30 HTV News (1) (155)
7.00 Emmerdale (1) (1345)
7.30 WALES: Wales This Week (567)
7.30 Home Sweet Home (1) (567)
8.00 The Bill: A woman is found dead in a church hall (1) (4203)

CENTRAL
As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (2810884)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (2774906)
6.25 Central News (526819)
6.55-7.00 Lifestyle (562906)
10.45 Late Teatime (478616)
11.45 Pulling Power (1012426)
12.55pm Eastern Mix (7545584)
12.50 The Jerry Springer Show (7870846)
1.40 Not Fade Away (757117)
2.40 Box Office America (7075652)
3.05 War of the Worlds (4112846)
3.55 Cybernet (4231372)
4.25 Eastern Mix (85730136)
4.50 Central Jobfinder '98 (53404117)
5.20 Asian Eye (1638932)

CHANNEL 4
6.00am Sesame Street (1) (15068) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (25242)
9.00 Schools: History in Action (7123292) 9.20 Geographical Eye over Asia (1) (7126722) 9.40 Understanding Northern Ireland (1) (2211703) 10.00 Middle English (1) (8459229) 10.15 Worlds of Fact (8465180) 10.30 Scientific Eye (1) (8533797) 10.50 On the Walls (8038161) (1) (7189)
11.30 Powerhouse (1) (5529) 12.00 The Morning Line (84906) 12.30pm Light Lunch: The guest is Jeremy Clarkson (1) (11703)
1.30 Racing from Cheltenham includes live coverage of the 2.00, 2.35, 3.15 and 3.55 races (193706)
4.30 Countdown (1) (5639426)
4.55 Ricki Lake: I Turned My Life Around — I Want My Baby Back (1) (800616)
5.30 Pet Rescue (1) (432)
6.00 Roseanne: Roseanne realises that Darlene needs educating about the opposite sex (1) (245)
6.30 Hollyoaks: Kurt tries to save his parents' marriage; Cindy is still upset about Tony, but he seems oblivious to it all (1) (797)
7.00 Channel 4 News (1) and weather (212600)
7.50 Lipson (501180)
8.00 Seaside (1/3) Behind the scenes at Haven's holiday centre near Scarborough (1) (8613)
9.00 Dispatches: A report on the sometimes flawed methods of Central's schools inspection agency (1) (432884)
9.45 Formations: What's a Pig Oscar-nominated animation. A classic Aardman animation about noble twins who are separated at birth (467093)
10.00 In the Best Interests of the Children (1990) Fact-based drama. Sarah Jessica Parker as a manic-depressive single mother caring for her young children. Directed by Michael Ray Rhodes (1) (379513)
11.45 Cheltenham Festival Highlights presented by Lesley Graham (518068)

CHANNEL 5
CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 83 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 83 are 10.520775 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.02 MHz
6.00am 5 News Early (8158180)
7.00 WideWorld (1) (5331364) 7.30 Mikhalek (6192161) 7.35 Wimpie's House (1) (4679264) 8.00 Hava Nakash (1) (1248068) 8.30 Deppledown Farm (1) (1343567)
9.00 Espresso (5734703) 10.00 Woodland Tales (1) (1) (1951862) 10.30 Sunset Beach (1) (5425616) 11.10 Lureza (2211937)
12.00 5 News (1) (1241155) 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (1) (6275703) 1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (5330635) 1.30 Sons and Daughters (8274074) 2.00 Beauty and the Beast (8427141) 3.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6443988)
3.30 Grayeagle (1978) With Ben Johnson, Iron Eyes Cody and Lane Wood. Rescuing of the classic western The Searchers, from the viewpoint of Native Americans. Directed by Charles B. Pierce (2266451)
5.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (3730818)
5.30 HouseBusters (1) (1) (267567)
6.00 100 Per Cent Game show without a host (725160)
6.30 Family Affairs: Mel is furious with Roy; Angus gets the travel bug (1) (7248432)
7.00 5 News (1) (138249)
7.30 European Cup Winners Cup Football Live: Chelsea v Real Betis from Stamford Bridge. Chelsea's Gianluca Vialli looks for managerial success in Europe to go with the medals he won as a player. The visitors Robert Jarni, Alfonso Finelli and George will provide a potent threat for local custodian Jonathan Thomas. In the event of extra time, subsequent programmes may run late (52943884)
9.50 The Real Monty: A look at the working life of a group of male strippers in Sheffield (229635)
10.50 The Jack Docherty Show: Chal and
11.30 Morfy: Celia Julia Docherty presents the show from the Backstreet Entertainment Awards in Hollywood. Plus an interview with Lina Thurman about her new film <i>Galatea</i> (4477646)
12.00 Live and Dangerous Sports magazine with Dominik Diamond. Includes US Major League Soccer between Miami Fusion and DC United and further action from the Brazilian league (18163730)
4.00am Prisoner: Cell Block B (5462372)
5.30 100 Per Cent (1) (5619440)

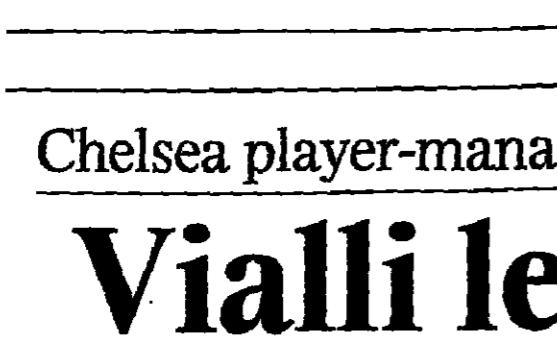
SKY 1
7.00pm Street Sharks (82140) 7.30 Gemini News (721384) 7.50 The Simpsons (15258)
7.55 Oprah (101969) 8.00 Hotel (82828)
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# SPORT

THURSDAY MARCH 19 1998

## RACING 47

### One Man gains belated first success at Festival



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By BRIAN GLANVILLE  
GIANLUCA VIALLI, though he may not realise it, is in the process of challenging history. On the eve of Chelsea's Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final, second leg against Real Betis at Stamford Bridge tonight, the player-manager demanded greater consistency and concentration from his team; just the qualities that Chelsea have lacked throughout their 95-year history.

They have, in fact, been a byword for unpredictability, capable of beating the best and losing to the worst. So much so that in the 1930s, a popular comedian recorded a satirical ditty, *The Day that Chelsea Won the Cup*. "And Gordon Richards wore Carnera's trousers in the Strand," he sang, "on the day that Chelsea went and won the Cup."

They did eventually win it, 65 years after their foundation, beating Leeds United in an FA Cup Final replay in Manchester, and followed that by beating Real Madrid in a replay of the Cup Winners' Cup final in Athens in 1971. A far more difficult achievement than that it would be to win the present, less distinguished Cup Winners' tournament.

Chelsea won 2-1 in Seville and, had Mark Hughes not missed, so untypically, the simplest of chances near the end, the margin would have been a much more comfortable 3-1. In the event, careless defence on the left flank almost enabled Betis to equalise, only a marvellous save by Ed de Goey, their Dutch goalkeeper, preventing Alfonso from heading his second goal of the game.

"I'm not concerned," Vialli said, not unreasonably, "with the way we play football when we've got the ball. It seems to me that when the opposition have the ball, we can't keep our concentration for 95 minutes. We are good enough to beat everybody, but what we have to improve is our consistency. Why do we have to lose against Leicester or Aston Villa or West Ham? Because at least we can play well. We don't have to lose. We don't have to give silly goals away. If we can get more consistent, we can take a great step forward to become one of the best teams in England."

"It is difficult to play always well, because you play against very tough opposition which knows everything about you, which is physically and mentally fresher than you because they don't play in Europe and don't play in the week."

Modestly, Vialli dismissed the notion that his unforeseen tactics had won the game in Seville. What mattered, he felt, was the way that Chelsea's effective football and two early goals by Tore Andre Flo surprised the Spaniards.

It seems fairly certain that Flo will play again and quite certain that Chelsea, like Betis - who have little alternative - will play on the attack. As Vialli said, Chelsea are better at attacking than defending. But so are Betis, whose defence is suspect both in the air and on the ground and who will be without Solozabal, the Spain international. He, like Fernando, the experienced midfielder player, is suspended.

It seems unlikely that Graeme Le Saux will have recovered sufficiently from his injured ankle to play at left back. Even if he has, Vialli said, he might not be in the right psychological condition for a match of this importance. As well that Danny Granville is now fit enough to be pitted against the pace and skill of Betis's Nigeria winger, Finidi George, who always threatened to cause damage in Seville, where his crosses were bullets that Alfonso could fire.

Will Chelsea, this time, use three up front? Will Vialli himself play? Predictably, he would say only that he would be in the squad, reluctant to give any advantage to Betis.

Meanwhile, it is clear that Vialli's patience is not infinite. "Our players are very, very clever and intelligent," he said. "You can't keep doing the same mistake, one, two, three times. That's it. Otherwise, better for us to find another job! I know we are capable of winning all the games. I get very sad if I see silly mistakes."

Gianfranco Zola, the Chelsea forward, insisted that he will not be worried by the yellow card he so unfairly incurred in Seville, when he should instead have had a penalty. "You don't have to be very worried. I don't usually get yellow cards. I think the referee thought I was simulating, but I wasn't simulating. It's something that sometimes can happen. But you don't have to be aware of it. You play your game and the other things are not important."

For all their tantalising history, Chelsea should now play their game and beat Betis again.

Chelsea (probable): 4-4-2: E de Goey - S. Carter, F. Lebovici, M. Duberry, D. Granville, D. Patterson, E. Newton, D. Williams, R. of Williams - T. A. Flo, G. Zola.  
REAL BETIS (probable): 3-4-3: A. Prieto - O. R. Vitoriano, O. Sosa - M. Garcia, H. Alonso, M. Merodio - F. Garcia, G. Garcia, R. Arca.  
Television: Channel 5, 7.30pm.

## GOLF 49

### Davies sets out to register place in history

## Positive aspects provide scant consolation for Villa manager

By RUSSELL KEMPSON  
BRIAN LITTLE, the former Aston Villa manager, started the job, but John Gregory, the new manager, was unable to finish it. Gregory publicly apologised to Little after Villa's dramatic exit from the Uefa Cup quarter-finals at Villa Park on Tuesday night, and he meant it. Although Little left the club last month, it was his side that had run Atletico Madrid so close.

The exit was the culmination of a series of first-half errors and Lee Hendrie, Julian Joachim and Ugo Ehiogu squandered second-half chances that, in the final equation, proved costly.

"I had hoped we wouldn't live to rue these misses," Gregory said after the return leg, which Villa won 2-1. Though it was the first time that Atletico had lost in-eight away games in Europe since Raddy Anic took over as coach, the aggregate of 2-2 gave them victory on the away goals rule.

That doesn't make it any easier to take," Gregory said. "I felt we had enough opportunities over the two legs. We had a marvellous climb once Atletico scored the away goal, but we nearly climbed it."

Jose Luis Camunero put Atletico ahead in the 28th minute, taking advantage of poor defending. Dwight Yorke headed against the bar and the introduction of Stan Collymore as a substitute reinvigorated Villa after the interval, goals from Ian Taylor and Collymore setting up a fascinating finale. Only a marvellous save from Jose Francisco Molina, the goalkeeper, that denied Hendrie prevented Villa from joining Internazionale, Lazio and Spartak Moscow in

the last four. Anic, a former Luton Town player, said: "In the second half, Villa played like a side who had nothing to lose and they gradually built up hope for themselves. It's definitely the toughest match we've had in the competition. I'm very relieved to go through."

With a break in the Premiership because of the international programme next week, Gregory can reflect on a memorable 21-day period in which he left the mokest surroundings of Wycombe Wanderers and travelled in the brink of the Uefa Cup semi-finals.

"We've had six games in a short space of time, winning four and losing the other two only 1-0," he said. "Everyone has shown a tremendous spirit and everyone, from the goalkeeper to the last substitute, has proved to me that they can play. They've all emerged with great credit."

More pertinent was a throwaway line. "I've seen a lot of little things to people," he said. "Some I'd like to keep, others I'd like to throw away."

Little saw a lot of the latter. He had tried to exert his authority, in his usual quiet, paternal manner, but it proved useless. Gregory's hectic honeymoon period is over. It has been a qualified success, he has identified points of weakness and he will act if need be. When Villa meet Everton on March 23, the rety work starts.

Arsenal on course, page 48



Vialli is likely to play to Chelsea's attacking strengths while stressing the need for caution against the talented Betis forwards. Photograph: Robin Mayes

beat everybody, but what we have to improve is our consistency. Why do we have to lose against Leicester or Aston Villa or West Ham? Because at least we can play well. We don't have to lose. We don't have to give silly goals away. If we can get more consistent, we can take a great step forward to become one of the best teams in England.

knows everything about you, which is physically and mentally fresher than you because they don't play in Europe and don't play in the week. Modestly, Vialli dismissed the notion that his unforeseen tactics had won the game in Seville. What mattered, he felt, was the way that Chelsea's effective football and two early goals by Tore Andre Flo surprised the Spaniards.

## Mansell back in driving seat

### Kevin Eason on a man who simply refuses to stay out of the limelight

AT LAST, the second coming of the Messiah of motor racing is nigh: Our Nige is back. Ford will announce tomorrow that it has signed Nigel Mansell to drive its Mondeo saloon in this year's British Touring Car Championships.

It will be a moment to make hearts leap among thousands of fans deprived of their lion-hearted hero of the track since his ill-fated departure from Formula One nearly three years ago.

Since he walked despondently away from McLaren in 1995, his Formula One career ending in ignominy and near-farce, Mansell has been desperate to return to the track but unable to find anybody who would either risk taking on a man with a famously prickly temperament or be able to pay the kind of salary he believed a former world champion deserved.

Although he has remained busy setting up his new golf resort in Devon, he has pinned for a return, even turning up to take part in a 24-hour ice racing meeting in Chamonix this year.

Negotiations with Ford are believed to have been going on for months and last night the company would still not confirm that Mansell was joining its saloon car team.

The invitation to Friday's announcement more than gave the game away, though. It says: "Ford has attracted one of the greatest names in motorsport to the Auto Trader BTCC, a name synonymous with success at the highest level and known to millions as one of Britain's home-grown legends."

Mansell is unlikely to take part in all of the season's races, probably turning out to up to six of the biggest. New rules allow teams to run three cars, which will mean Ford can simply add Mansell's Mondeo to the grid.

How much Mansell is being paid is secret, but speculation puts the figure as high as £1 million, even for a limited series of appearances.

## Drivers warned against grand prix collusion

THE Formula One authorities gave warning yesterday that any repetition of the collusion between David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen at the Australian Grand Prix will be "severely punished".

The McLaren drivers agreed before the race on March 8 that whoever reached the first corner first would be allowed to win.

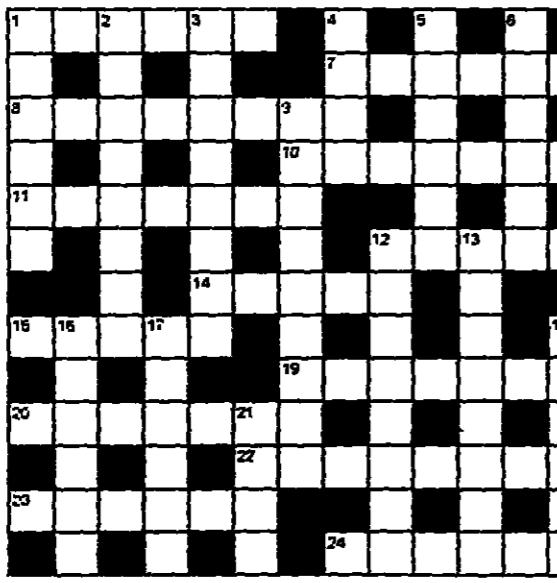
Hakkinen took the lead from pole position and was heading for a comfortable victory before he was mistakenly called in for a pit stop. Coulthard took over the lead but allowed his Finnish teammate to pass him two laps before the finish to honour

their agreement. Hakkinen praised the Scot for his "great sportsmanship", but Formula One followers, particularly those who had bet on Coulthard, were outraged that they had been robbed of a fair result and called for a ban on such "team orders".

The International Automobile Federation (FIA) today stopped short of a ban, but instructed Formula One race stewards to come down hard on any similar incidents in the future.

The decision means, in effect, that team orders have not been banned but should not be implemented again in such circumstances.

## TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1357

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- DOWN: 1 Breathe new life into (6), 2 French stick (8), 3 Enthusiasm (8), 4 Professional cook (4), 5 Oration (6), 6 Church caretaker (6), 9 Lincentre (climate) (9), 12 The chronicle of Barse (8), 13 Printer's star (5), 16 Car horn; nose (slang) (6), 17 Island off Italy toe (6), 18 Shiny; sort of magazine (6), 21 Insignificant, empty, talk (4)

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PREMIERES ON SATURDAY  
TREVOR'S BLUES  
UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

MORSE  
93% said 'Yes'.  
7% said 'No'.  
An exit poll of IT executives attending our recent Network Computing seminars revealed some interesting facts.  
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